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## THE CONNECTICUT COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL

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## PROFESSOR STOWE'S REPORT ON THE COURSE OF INSTRUCTION IN THE COMMON SCHOOLS OF PRUS. SIA—CONCLUDED.

The first object is to illustrate the different parts of speech, such as the noun, the verb, the adjective, the adverb; and this is done by engaging the pupil in conversation, and leading him to form sentences in which the particular part of speech to be learned shall be the most important word, and directing his attention to the nature and use of the word in the place where he uses it. For example, let us suppose the nature and use of the adverb is to be taught: The teacher writes upon the blackboard the words "here, there, near," &c. He then says, "Children, we are all together in this room; by which of the words on the blackboard can you express this?" Children—"We are all *here*." Teacher—"Now look out of the window and see the church; what can you say of the church with the second word on the blackboard?" Children—"The church is *there*." Teacher—"The distance between us and the church is not great; how will you express this by a word on the blackboard?" Children—"The church is *near*." The fact that these different words express the same sort of relations is then explained, and, accordingly, that they belong to the same class, or are the same part of speech. The variations of these words are next explained. "Children, you say the church is *near*, but there is a shop between us and the church, what will you say of the shop?" Children—"The shop is *nearer*." Teacher—"But there is a fence between us and the shop. Now; when you think of the distance between us, the shop and the fence, what will you say of the fence?" Children—"The fence is *nearest*." So of other adverbs. "The lark sings *well*. Compare the singing of the lark with that of the canary-bird. Compare the singing of the nightingale with that of the canary-bird." After all the different sorts of adverbs and their variations have in this way been illustrated, and the pupils understand that all words of this kind are called *adverbs*, the definition of the adverb is given as it stands in the grammar, and the book is put into their hands to study the chapter on this topic. In this way the pupil understands what he is doing at every step of his progress, and his memory is never burdened with mere names to which he can attach no definite meaning.

The mode of teaching the subsequent branches is founded on the same general principles, and it may not be necessary to give particular examples.

5. Numbers, or Arithmetic.

6. Doctrine of space and form, or Geometry.

7. Singing by note, or elements of Music.

The method of teaching music has already been successfully introduced into our own state, and whoever visits the schools of Messrs. Mason or Solomon, in Cincinnati, will have a much better idea of what it is than any description can give; nor will any one who visits these schools entertain a doubt that all children from six to ten years of age, who are capable of learning to read, are capable of learning to sing, and that this branch of instruction can be introduced into all our common schools with the greatest advantage, not only to the comfort and discipline of the pupils, but also to their progress in their other studies.

The students are taught from the blackboard. The different sounds are represented by lines of different lengths, by letters, by figures, and by musical notes; and the pupils are thoroughly drilled on each successive principle before proceeding to the next.

## III. Third part of two years—Children from ten to twelve.

### 1. Exercises in Reading and Elocution.

The object of these exercises in this part of the course is to accustom the pupils to read in a natural and impressive manner, so as to bring the full force of the sentiment on those to whom they read. They are examined in modulation, emphasis, and the various intonations, and they often read sentences from the blackboard, in which the various modulations are expressed by musical notes or curved lines.

The evils of drawing and monotone are prevented in the outset by the method of teaching, particularly the practice of the whole class reading together and keeping time. Short and pithy sentences, particularly the book of Proverbs, are recommended as admirably adapted to exercises of this kind.

### 2. Ornamental Writing introductory to Drawing.

The various kinds of ornamental letters are here practised upon, giving accuracy to the eye and steadiness to the hand, preparatory to skill in drawing, which comes into the next part of the course. The pupils also practice writing sentences and letters, with neatness, rapidity and correctness.

### 3. Religious instruction in the connected Bible history.

The design here is to give to the student a full and connected view of the whole Bible history. For this purpose large tables are made out and hung before the students. These tables are generally arranged in four columns; the first containing the names of the distinguished men during a particular period of Bible history; the second the dates; the third a chronological register of events; and the 4th the particular passages of the Bible where the history of these persons and events may be found. With these tables before the pupils, the teacher himself, in his own words, gives a brief conversational outline of the principal characters and events within a certain period, and then gives directions that the scriptural passages referred to be carefully read. After this is done the usual recitation and examination takes place. Some of the more striking narratives, such as the finding of Moses on the banks of the Nile; Abraham offering his son; the journey of the wise men to do homage to Christ; the crucifixion; the conversion of Paul, &c. are committed to memory in the words of the Bible, and the recitations accompanied with the singing of a hymn alluding to these events. The moral instruction, to be derived from each historical event is carefully impressed by the teacher. The teacher also gives them a brief view of the history between the termination of the Old and the commencement of the New Testament, that nothing may be wanting to a complete and systematic view of the whole ground. Thus the whole of the historical part of the Bible is studied thoroughly and systematically, and practically, without the least sectarian bias, and without a moment being spent on a single idea that will not be of the highest use to the scholar during all his future life.

### Language and Grammar.

There is here a continuation of the exercises in the preceding parts of the course, in a more scientific form, together with parsing of connected sentences, and writing from the dictation of the teacher, with reference to grammar, orthography, and punctuation. The same principle alluded to before, of avoiding technical terms till the things represented by those terms are clearly perceived, is here carefully adhered to. A single specimen of the manner in which the moods and tenses of the verb are taught may be sufficient to illustrate my meaning. The teacher writes on the blackboard a simple sentence, as, "The scholars learn well," and asks the class what sort of a sentence it is. They reply that it is a direct statement of fact. (Teach.) Put it in the form of a command. (Class.) Scholars, learn well. (Teach.) Put it in a question form. (Class.) Do the scholars learn well? (Teach.) Of a wish. (Class.) May the scholars learn well! (Teach.) Of an exclamation. (Class.) How well the scholars learn! (Teach.) The conditional form. (Class.) If the scholars learn well; or should the scholars learn well.—(Teach.) Of necessity. (Class.) The scholars must learn well. (Teach.) Of ability. (Class.) The scholars can learn well, &c. They are then taught that the direct statement is called the indicative mood of the verb; the command the imperative mood; the conditional, the subjunctive mood; the wish, the potential mood, &c.; and, after this, the book is put into their hands, and they study the lesson as it stands. After this the different tenses of the several moods are taught in the same way.

5. Real instruction, or the knowledge of nature and the external world, including the first elements of the natural sciences, the arts

of life, geography, and history. Instruction on this head is directed to the answering of the following questions, namely:

(a) What is man, as it respects his corporal and intellectual nature?

Here comes anatomy and physiology, so far as the structure of the human body is concerned, and the function of its several parts.

Also the simple elements of mental philosophy. In this connexion appropriate texts of scripture are quoted, as Gen. ii., 7; Ps. cxxxix., 13-16. An appropriate hymn is also sung.

"7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

"14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well.

"15. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

"16. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

(b) What does man need for the preservation and cheerful enjoyment of life, as it respects his body and mind? For his body he needs food; the different kinds of food and the mode of preparing them are here brought to view; the unwholesomeness of some kinds of food; injuriousness of improper food; cooking; evils of gluttony. The different kinds of clothing and modes of preparing them; what sort of dress is necessary to health; folly and wickedness of vanity and extravagance. *Dwellings*; materials of which houses are constructed; mode of constructing them; different trades employed in their construction.

For the mind man needs *society*; the family and its duties; the neighborhood and its duties. Intellectual, moral, and religious cultivation; the school and its duties; the church and its duties. For the body and mind both, he needs *security* of person and property; the government; the legislature; the courts, &c.

(c) Where and how do men find the means to supply their wants, and make themselves comfortable and happy in this life?

The vegetable, the mineral, and the animal kingdoms are here brought to view, for materials, together with agriculture and manufactures as the means of converting these materials to our use. Geography with special reference to the productions of countries, and their civil, literary, and religious institutions; towns, their organization and employments. Geography is sometimes taught by blank charts, to which the students are required to affix the names of the several countries, rivers, mountains, principal towns, &c. and then state the productions and institutions for which they are remarkable. Sometimes the names of countries, rivers, &c. are given, and the pupil is required to construct an outline chart of their localities.

In respect to all the above points, the native country is particularly studied: its capabilities, its production, its laws, its institutions, its history, &c. are investigated, with especial reference to its ability of supplying the physical, social, and moral wants of its inhabitants. Under this head the pupils are taught to appreciate their native country, to venerate and love its institutions, to understand what is necessary to their perfection, and to imbibe a spirit of pure and generous patriotism. It is scarcely necessary to add, that all the instruction under this fifth head is confined to the fundamental and simplest principles of the several branches referred to.

6. Arithmetic continued through fractions and the rules of proportion.

7. Geometry, doctrines of magnitudes and measures.

8. Singing and science of local and instrumental music.

IV. *Fourth part of two years—Children from twelve to fourteen.*

1. Religious instruction, in the religious observation of nature, the life and discourses of Jesus Christ, the history of the Christian religion, in connexion with the contemporary civil history, and the principal doctrines of the Christian system.

The first topic of instruction mentioned under this head is one of peculiar interest and utility. The pupils are taught to observe, with care and system, the various powers and operations of nature, and to consider them as so many illustrations of the wisdom, power and goodness of the Creator; and at each lesson they are directed to some appropriate passage of the Bible, which they read and commit to memory; and thus the idea is continually impressed on them, that the God of nature and the God of the Bible are one and the same being.

For example, as introductory to the whole study, the first chapter of Genesis, together with some other appropriate passage of Scripture, as the 147th Psalm or the 98th chapter of Job, may be read and committed to memory. The surface of the earth, as illustrating the power and wisdom of God, may be taken as a lesson. Then the varieties of surface, as mountains, valleys, oceans, and rivers, continents and islands, height of mountains, the breadth of oceans, the length of rivers, remarkable cataracts, extended caverns, volcanoes, tides, &c. may be taken into view, and the teacher may impress upon the class the greatness, power, and intelligence necessary for

such a creation. The whole is fortified by the application of such a passage as Psalm civ., 1-13.

"1. Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty.

"2. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.

"3. Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

"4. Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire;

"5. Who laid the foundation of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.

"6. Thou coverdest it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.

"7. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

"8. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

"9. Thou hast set a bound, that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

"10. He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.

"11. They give drink to every beast of the field; the wild asses quench their thirst.

"12. By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.

"13. He watereth the hills from his chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works."

"24. O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches.

"25. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

"26. There go the ships; there is that leviathan whom thou hast made to play therein."

The fruitfulness and beauty of the earth, as illustrating the wisdom and goodness of God, may serve as another lesson. Here may be exhibited the beauty and variety of the plants and flowers with which the earth is adorned; the manner of their growth and self-propagation, their utility to man and beast, their immense number and variety, their relations to each other as genera and species; trees and their varieties, their beauty and utility, their timber and their fruit; and, in connexion with this lesson, Psalm civ., 14-34, may be committed to memory.

"14. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that he may bring forth fruit out of the earth;

"15. And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.

"16. The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted;

"17. Where the birds make their nests; as for the stalk, the fir-trees are her house.

"18. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the conies.

"19. He appointeth the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

"20. Thou makest darkness, and it is night; wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.

"21. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.

"22. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

"23. Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening."

"27. These wait all upon thee; that thou mayst give them their meat in due season.

"28. That thou givest them they gather; thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

"29. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

"30. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.

"31. The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever; the Lord shall rejoice in his works.

"32. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

"33. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise unto my God while I have my being.

"34. My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord." In like manner, the creation and nourishment, the habits and instincts of various animals may be contemplated in connexion with Proverbs vi., 6-8, Psalm civ., 17-22; Proverbs xxx., 24-31; Gen. i., 20-24; Psalm cxiv., 15-16.

"6. Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

"7. Which have no guide, overseer, or ruler,

"8. Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest."

"24. There be four things which are little on the earth, but they are exceeding wise;

"25. The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer.

"26. The conies are but a feeble folk, yet they make their houses in the rocks.

"27. The locusts have no king, yet they go forth all of them by bands;

"28. The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

"29. There be three things which go well, yea, four are comely in going—

"30. A lion, which is strongest amongst beasts, and turneth not away for any.



"31. A greyhound; an he-goat also; and a king against whom there is no rising up."

"24. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so.

"25. And God made the beasts of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind; and God saw that it was good."

"15. The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

"16. Thou openest thine hand; and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

"17. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."

The phenomena of light and color, the nature of the rainbow, &c. may make another interesting lesson, illustrating the unknown forms of beauty and glory which exist in the Divine Mind, and which He may yet develop in other and still more glorious worlds in connexion with Gen. i., 3, 5, 9, 13, 14, and other passages of like kind.

So the properties of the air, wind, and storm, Job. xxviii., 25-28, 33, 34, 35; Ps. cxlvii., 8.

"33. Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

"34. Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee.

"35. Canst thou send lightnings? that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?

"36. Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?

"37. Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven?"

Then the heavens, the sun, moon, planets, fixed stars, and comets, the whole science of astronomy, so far as it can be introduced with advantage into common schools, can be contemplated in the same way. The enlightening, elevating, and purifying moral influence of such a scheme of instruction, carried through the whole system of nature, must be clearly obvious to every thinking mind; and its utility, considered merely with reference to worldly good, is no less manifest.

The second topic of religious instruction is more exclusively scriptural. The life of Christ and the history of the apostles, as given in the New Testament, are chronologically arranged, and tables formed as before. (III. 3.) The discourses of Christ are examined and explained in their chronological arrangement, and in the same way the discourses and epistles of the apostles. The history of Christianity, in connexion with the contemporary civil history, is taught in a series of conversational lectures. To conclude the whole course of religious instruction, a summary of the Christian doctrine is given in the form of some approved catechism.

2. Knowledge of the world, and mankind, including civil society, constitutional law, agriculture, mechanic arts, manufactures, &c.

This is a continuation and completion in a more systematic form of the instruction commenced in III., 5. The course begins with the family, and the first object is to construct a habitation. The pupil tells what materials are necessary for this purpose, where they are to be found, how brought together and fitted into the several parts of the building. The house must now be furnished. The different articles of furniture and their uses are named in systematic order; the materials of which they are made, and the various trades employed in making them, are enumerated. Then comes the garden, its tools and products, and whatever else is necessary for the subsistence and physical comforts of a family. Then the family duties and virtues; parental and filial obligation and affection; rights of property; duties of neighborhoods; and civil relations of society; the religious relations of society; the state, the fatherland, &c.; finally, geography, history, and travels. Books of travels are compiled expressly for the use of schools, and are found to be of the highest interest and utility.

3. Language and exercise in composition.

The object here is to give the pupils a perfect command of their native tongue and ability to use it on all occasions with readiness and power. The first exercises are on simple questions, such as, "Why ought children to love and obey their parents?" or they are short descriptions of visible objects, such as a house, a room, a garden, &c. There are also exercises on the various forms of expressing the same idea, as "The sun enlightens the earth." "The earth is enlightened by the sun." "The sun is the source of light to the earth." "The sun sends out its rays to enlighten the earth." "The earth is enlightened by rays sent out from the sun," &c. There are exercises also of the same sort, or metaphors and other figures of speech; familiar letters are then written, and short essays on themes such as may be furnished from the book of Proverbs and other sentences of the kind; and thus gradual advancement is made to all the higher and graver modes of composition.

4. Application of arithmetic and mathematics to the business of life, including surveying, civil engineering, &c.

The utility of this branch of instruction, and the mode of it, after

what has already been said, are probably too obvious to need any further illustration.

5. Elements of drawing.

For this the pupils have already been prepared by the exercises in ornamental writing in the previous part of the course. They have already acquired that accuracy of sight and steadiness of hand which are among the most essential requisites to drawing well. The first exercises are in drawing lines and the most simple mathematical figures, such as the square, the cube, the triangle, the parallelogram, generally from wooden models placed at some little distance on a shelf before the class. From this they proceed to architectural figures, such as doors, windows, columns, and facades. Then the figures of animals, such as a horse, a cow, an elephant, first from other pictures, and then from nature. A plant, a rose, or some flower is placed upon a shelf, and the class make a picture of it. From this they proceed to landscape painting, historical painting, and the higher branches of the art, according to their time and capacity. All learn enough of drawing to use it in the common business of life, such as plotting a field, laying out a canal, or drawing the plan of a building, and many attain to a high degree of excellence.

6. Exercises in singing and the science of music.

The instructions of the previous parts are extended as far as possible, and include singing and playing at sight, and the more abstruse and difficult branches of the science and the art of music.

#### CHARACTER OF THE SYSTEM.

The striking features of this system, even in the hasty and imperfect sketch which my limits allow me to give, are obvious even to superficial observation. No one can fail to observe its great completeness, both as to the number and kind of subjects embraced in it, and as to its adaptedness to develop every power of every kind, and give it a useful direction. What topic in all that is necessary for a sound business education is here omitted? I can think of nothing, unless it be one or two of the modern languages, and these are introduced wherever it is necessary, as has already been seen in the study-sheet of Dr. Diesterweg's seminary, inserted on a preceding page of this report. I have not taken the course precisely as it exists in any one school, but have combined, from an investigation of many institutions, the features which I supposed would most fairly represent the whole system. In the Rhinish provinces of Prussia, in a considerable part of Bavaria, Baden, and Wirtemberg, French is taught as well as German; in the schools of Prussian Poland, German and Polish are taught; and even English, in the Russian schools of Cronstadt and Archangel, where so many English and American merchants resort for the purposes of trade. Two languages can be taught in a school as easily as one, provided the teacher be perfectly familiar, as any one may see by visiting Mr. Solomon's school in Cincinnati, where all the instruction is given both in German and English.

What faculty of mind is there that is not developed in the scheme of instruction sketched above? I know of none. The perceptive and reflective faculties, the memory and the judgment, the imagination and the taste, the moral and religious faculty, and even the various kinds of physical and manual dexterity, all have opportunity for development and exercise. Indeed, I think the system in its great outlines as nearly complete as human ingenuity and skill can make it, though undoubtedly some of its arrangements and details admit of improvement, and some changes will of course be necessary in adapting it to the circumstances of different countries.

The entire practical character of the system is obvious throughout. It views every subject on the practical side, and in reference to its adaptedness to use. The dry, technical, abstract parts of science are not those first presented; but the system proceeds in the only way which nature ever pointed out, from practice to theory, from parts to demonstrations. It has often been a complaint in respect to some systems of education, that the more a man studied, the less he knew of the actual business of life. Such a complaint cannot be made in reference to this system; for, being intended to educate for the actual business of life, this object is never for a moment lost sight of.

Another striking feature of the system is its moral and religious character. Its morality is pure and elevated, its religion entirely removed from the narrowness of sectarian bigotry. What parent is there, loving his children, and wishing to have them respected and happy, who would not desire that they should be educated under such a kind of moral and religious influence as has been described? Whether a believer in revelation or not, does he not know that without sound morals there can be no happiness, and that there is no morality like the morality of the New Testament? Does he not know that, without religion, the human heart can never be at rest, and that there is no religion like the religion of the Bible? Every well-informed man knows that, as a general fact, it is impossible to impress the obligations of morality with any efficiency on the heart of a child, or even on that of an adult, without an appeal to some code which is sustained by the authority of God; and for what code will it be possible to claim this authority, if not for the code of the Bible?

But perhaps some will be ready to say, the scheme is indeed an excellent one, provided only it were practicable; but the idea of introducing so extensive and complete a course of study into our common schools is entirely visionary, and can never be realized. I answer, that it is no theory which I have been exhibiting, but a matter of fact, a copy of actual practice. The above system is no visionary scheme emanating from the closet of a recluse, but a sketch of the course of instruction now actually pursued by thousands of schoolmasters in the best district schools that have ever been organized. It can be done, for it has been done, it is now done, and it ought to be done. If it can be done in Europe, I believe it can be done in the United States; if it can be done in Prussia, I know it can be done in Ohio. The people have but to say the word and provide the means, and the thing is accomplished; for the word of the people here is even more powerful than the word of the king there; and the means of the people here are altogether more abundant for such an object than the means of the sovereign there. Shall this object, then, so desirable in itself, so entirely practicable, so easily within our reach, fail of accomplishment? For the honor and welfare of our state, for the safety of our whole nation, I trust it will not fail; but that we shall soon witness in this commonwealth the introduction of a system of common school instruction fully adequate to all the wants of our population.

But the question occurs, *How can this be done?* I will give a few brief hints as to some things which I suppose to be essential to the attainment of so desirable an end.

#### MEANS OF SUSTAINING THE SYSTEM.

1. Teachers must be skilful, and trained to their business. It will at once be perceived that the plan above sketched out proceeds on the supposition that the teacher has fully and distinctly in his mind the whole course of instruction, not as it respects the matter to be taught, but also as to the best modes of teaching, that he may be able readily and decidedly to vary his method according to the peculiarities of each individual mind under his care. This is the only true secret of successful teaching. The old mechanical method, in which the teacher relies entirely on his text book, and drags every mind along through the same dull routine of creeping recitation, is utterly insufficient to meet the wants of our people. It may do in Asiatic Turkey, where the whole object of the school is to learn to pronounce the words of the Koran in one dull, monotonous series of sounds; or it may do in China, where men must never speak or think out of the old beaten track of Chinese imbecility; but it will never do in the United States, where the object of education ought to be to make immediately available, for the highest and best purposes, every particle of real talent that exists in the nation. To effect such a purpose, the teacher must possess a strong and independent mind, well disciplined, and well stored with everything pertaining to his profession, and ready to adapt his instructions to every degree of intellectual capacity and every kind of acquired habit. But how can we expect to find such teachers, unless they are trained to their business? A very few of extraordinary powers may occur, as we sometimes find able mechanics and great mathematicians who had no early training in their favorite pursuits; but these few exceptions to a general rule will never multiply fast enough to supply our schools with able teachers. The management of the human mind, particularly youthful mind, is the most delicate task ever committed to the hand of man; and shall it be left to mere instinct, or shall our schoolmasters have at least as careful a training as our lawyers and physicians?

2. Teachers, then, must have the means of acquiring the necessary qualifications; in other words, there must be institutions in which the business of teaching is made a systematic object of attention. I am not an advocate for multiplying our institutions. We already have more in number than we support, and it would be wise to give power and efficiency to those we now possess before we project new ones. But the science and art of teaching ought to be a regular branch of study in some of our academies and high schools, that those who are looking forward to this profession may have an opportunity of studying its principles. In addition to this, in our populous towns where there is opportunity for it, there should be large model schools, under the care of the most able and experienced teachers that can be obtained; and the candidates for the profession, who have already completed the theoretic course of the academy, should be employed in this school as monitors or assistants, thus testing all their theories by practice, and acquiring skill and dexterity under their head master. Thus, while learning they would be teaching, and no time or effort would be lost. To give efficiency to the whole system, to present a general standard and a prominent point of union, there should be at least one model teachers' seminary at some central point, as at Columbus, which shall be amply provided with all the means of study and instruction, and have connected with it schools of every grade, for the practice of the students under the immediate superintendence of their teachers.

3. The teachers must be competently supported, and devoted to their business. Few men attain any great degree of excellence in a

profession unless they love it and place all their hopes in life upon it. A man cannot, consistently with his duty to himself, engage in a business which does not afford him a competent support, unless he has other means of living, which is not the case with many who engage in teaching. In this country especially, where there are such vast fields of profitable employment open to every enterprising man, it is not possible that the best of teachers can be obtained, to any considerable extent, for our district schools at the present rate of wages. We have already seen what encouragement is held out to teachers in Russia, Prussia, and other European nations, and what pledges are given of competent support to their families, not only while engaged in the work, but when, having been worn out in the public service, they are no longer able to labor. In those countries, where every profession and walk of life is crowded, and where one of the most common and oppressive evils is want of employment, men of high talents and qualifications are often glad to become teachers even of district schools; men who in this country would aspire to the highest places in our colleges, or even our halls of legislation and courts of justice. How much more necessary, then, here, that the profession of teaching should afford a competent support!

Indeed, such is the state of things in this country, that we cannot expect to find male teachers for all our schools. The business of educating, especially young children, must fall, to a great extent, on female teachers. There is not the same variety of tempting employment for females as for men; they can be supported cheaper, and the Creator has given them peculiar qualifications for the education of the young. Females, then, ought to be employed extensively in all our elementary schools, and they should be encouraged and aided in obtaining the qualifications necessary for this work. There is no country in the world where women hold so high a rank or exert so great an influence as here; wherefore her responsibilities are the greater, and she is under obligations to render herself the more actively useful. I think our fair countrywomen, notwithstanding the exhortations of Harriet Martineau, Fanny Wright, and some other ladies and gentlemen, will never seek distinction in our public assemblies for public discussion, or in our halls of legislation; but in their appropriate work of educating the young, of forming the opening mind to all that is good and great, the more they distinguish themselves the better.

4. The children must be made comfortable in their school; they must be punctual, and attend the whole course. There can be no profitable study without personal comfort; and the inconvenience and miserable arrangements of some of our school houses are enough to annihilate all that can be done by the best of teachers. No instructor can teach unless the pupils are present to be taught, and no plan of systematic instruction can be carried steadily through unless the pupils attend punctually and through the whole course.

5. The children must be given up implicitly to the discipline of the school. Nothing can be done unless the teacher has the entire control of his pupils in school hours, and out of school too, so far as the rules of the school are concerned. If the parent in any way interferes with or overrules the arrangement of the teacher, he may attribute it to himself if the school is not successful. No teacher ever ought to be employed to whom the entire management of the children cannot be safely intrusted; and better at any time dismiss the teacher than counteract his discipline. Let parents but take the pains and spend the money necessary to provide a comfortable school house and a competent teacher for their children, and they never need apprehend that the discipline of the school will be unreasonably severe. No inconsiderable part of the corporate punishment that has been inflicted in schools has been made necessary by the discomfort of school houses and the unskillfulness of teachers. A lively, sensitive boy is stuck upon a bench full of knot holes and sharp ridges, without a support for his feet or his back, with a scorching fire on one side of him and a freezing wind on the other; and a stiff Orbilius of a master, with wooden brains and iron hands, orders him to sit perfectly still, with nothing to employ his mind or his body, till it is his turn to read. Thus confined for hours, what can the poor little fellow do but begin to wriggle like a fish out of water or an eel in a frying pan? For this irrepressible effort at relief he receives a box on the ear; this provokes and renders him still more uneasy, and next comes the merciless ferule; and the poor child is finally burnt and frozen, cuffed and beaten into hardened roguery or incurable stupidity, just because the avarice of his parents denied him a comfortable school house and a competent teacher.

6. A beginning must be made at certain points, and the advance towards completeness must be gradual. Everything cannot be done at once, and such a system as is needed cannot be generally introduced till its benefits are first demonstrated by actual experiment. Certain great points, then, where the people are ready to co-operate, and to make the most liberal advances in proportion to their means, to maintain the schools, should be selected, and no pains or expense spared till the full benefits of the best system are realized; and as the good effects are seen, other places will very readily follow the



example. All experience has shown that governmental patronage is most profitably employed, not to do the entire work, but simply as an incitement to the people to help themselves.

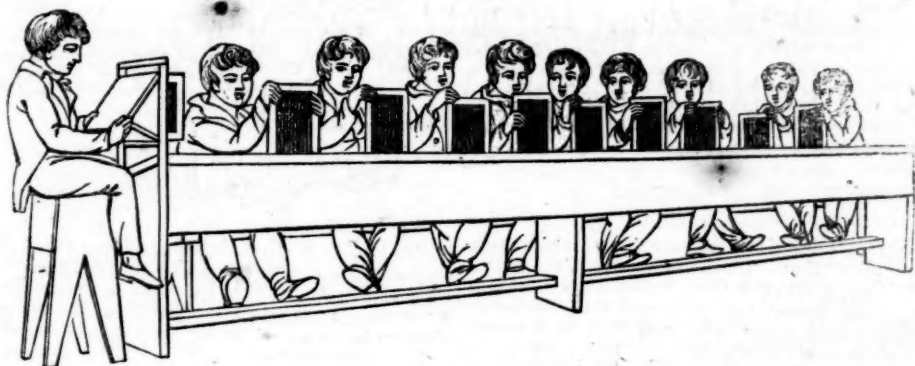
To follow up this great object, the legislature has wisely made choice of a Superintendent whose untiring labors and disinterested zeal are worthy of all praise. But no great plan can be carried through in a single year; and if the Superintendent is to have opportunity to do what is necessary, and to preserve that independence and energy of official character which is requisite to the successful discharge of his duties, he should hold his office for the same term as on the same conditions as the Judges of the Supreme Court.

Every officer engaged in this, or in every other public work, should receive a suitable compensation for his services. This justice requires and it is the only way to secure fidelity and efficiency.

These suggestions I have made with unfeigned diffidence, and with a sincere desire that the work which has been so nobly begun by the Legislature of Ohio may be carried forward to a glorious result. I should hardly have ventured to take such liberty had not my commission expressly authorized me to "make such practical observations as I might think proper," as well as to report facts. I know that I am addressing enlightened and patriotic men, who have discernment to perceive, and good feeling to appreciate every sincere attempt, however humble it may be, for the country's good; and I have therefore spoken out plainly and directly the honest convictions of my heart, feeling assured that what is honestly meant, will, by high-minded men, be kindly received.

All which is respectfully submitted,  
COLUMBUS, Dec. 18, 1837.

C. E. STOWE.



### MUTUAL INSTRUCTION.

A single view of an object is frequently more satisfactory, as well as more instructive than a long description of it. As we wish that all teachers and friends of education should be well informed concerning every department and method of school instruction and discipline, we shall avail ourselves of all the means in our reach to diffuse correct and precise information among our readers.

Much has been said of Mutual Instruction; but we apprehend that many incorrect, or at least vague ideas exist with respect to it. In our opinion, it possesses both defects and excellencies. We are also of opinion, as we have before had occasion to remark, that some of its best features may be adopted in common Schools, under such limitations and modifications as different circumstances may require. By this we mean only to suggest, that one pupil may sometimes be employed by the teacher to instruct a class of younger children, or to hear them recite, or to oversee the school, and thus not only relieve him of a portion of his cares, but do good to others and improve himself; that simultaneous exercises may be sometimes used with advantage, in different departments;—that slates, low benches, long open desks, and other kinds of fixtures and apparatus common to schools of mutual instruction, may be wisely adopted. If in each district such features of this plan as might be approved were introduced, it is probable that decided benefits would result from the change.

The desk represented in the cut is such as have been described in our remarks on school-house fixtures. It affords a pretty correct specimen of those used in the public schools of New York city, the British schools, and the schools of mutual instruction generally. It will be observed that they are simple, neat, convenient, formed without a waste of materials, so open as to afford but little concealment or obstruction to the air.

Each boy has a narrow opening in the top of his desk, to slide his slate into when not in use. It there stands perpendicularly, not in the way, nor exposed to injury in any manner.—The signals for drawing and replacing the slates are usually obeyed with strict care to make no noise. Each inkstand is let into a hole near the slate, but so loosely that it can be taken out. A small groove near it receives a block of wood, on which is written the name of the occupant. A high moveable seat and desk are provided at one end of the desk, for the monitor. The seats are small round chairs without backs, all in each row being fastened to one thick plank, which may be moved, and

can be screwed to the floor if necessary. The legs of the desk are fastened to the floor by means of small bent plates of iron fixed to the lower ends of the legs. The want of backs is considered the principal defect. This is partially counteracted in some schools, by the practice of placing the pupils, a part of their time in seats against the walls; but it ought to be entirely removed, by having backs to these benches.

With this simple arrangement, a great variety of exercises are weekly and even daily carried on in schools of mutual instruction; and when simultaneous instruction is extensively practiced, (as it is in many schools called mutual or monitorial,) the variety becomes greater. The following brief description of exercises in particular branches, may give a general idea of the various applications of which the system is capable.

A boy is furnished by the teacher with a list of words on a paper, and a long rod. He takes his stand in front of this desk, and perhaps the boys of several other desks behind it are required to take part in the exercise. All have their slates and pencils. He silently points at a letter in the written alphabet on the wall. They all, as silently, write it. He points at another letter, another, &c. and at the end of the word lowers the rod, as a signal. When sufficient has been done, he ceases, and the monitors, passing behind their classes, inspect, question, correct or report to the teacher, according to circumstances. Every teacher will perceive that such an exercise, when well conducted, must be highly favorable to stillness, order, despatch and improvement.

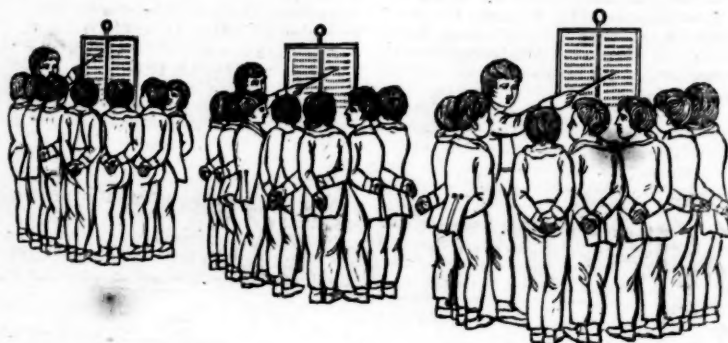
Spelling and defining are often happily combined with writing and pronunciation, by a method no less simple and efficacious, at which 50 or more pupils are sometimes engaged. An assistant or general monitor, takes a list of words in his hand, suited to the different classes, and marked accordingly. Approaching the front desk, he stops, and calls out the number of the class, and then spells and defines the word intended for it, in a clear and distinct manner. The class monitor at the end of the desk repeats it accurately, while the former passes on. The boys then all write the word and its meaning. But commonly before they have done, the general monitor has given out two, three or more words in the same manner to as many classes, which are now busily engaged in writing them, after hearing them repeated by their class monitors.

This is one of the exercises by "Dictation," as it is called;

and they are numerous, the method being applicable, with suitable variations, to a variety of studies.

These and other forms of instruction are practiced in female schools as well as male; but the exercises in needle work are among the most pleasing of those to be found in girls' schools of this class. To a stranger, they present a novel sight on sewing days, when desks like that above drawn ap-

pears covered with folding papers, aprons and samplers instead of slates and writing books, and needles take the place of pens and pencils, while a sedate, attentive girl, from the monitor's seat, overlooks, while she instructs and assists her companions. The division into classes, and their separation facilitates instruction in this branch, as in others, in large schools.



This print represents one of the daily exercises in a primary school of mutual instruction. The upright posts in the centre of each class are supported on flat feet, and having been placed with appropriate lesson, card or lesson board hung on each, the children march out in order, and take their stand, every class with a monitor to direct it. The children are required to stand with their hands folded behind, or at least to fold them so when the signal is given. This position of the arms is found to be one of the simplest and most effectual way to prevent disorder, and to take away both the occasion and temptation to be inattentive and playful.

Various exercises are performed, by different classes, while they occupy the places at draughts or in circles, as this form of arrangement is sufficiently denominated. The youngest alphabet, spelling and reading classes are daily exercised in this manner. For example, in learning the letters, the monitor or assistant sometimes points at each in succession, and names it, and requires the pupils to repeat it. Sometimes he points and requires them to give the names. So in spelling, the monitor first points, spells and pronounces each syllable or word, requiring the pupils to follow every step, and afterwards silently points, while they spell and pronounce. Again, he sometimes turns the card from them, gives out the word or syllables, and requires them to spell.

#### SCHOOL HOUSES.

In addition to the plans and suggestions which we have laid before our readers, we make the following extracts from the valuable Report of Mr. Mann, Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. We should like to give the document entire, but our limits will not allow at this time; and as many of our districts are making arrangements to build new school houses or repair their old ones very soon, we are anxious to put them in possession of the most material, of Mr. Mann's suggestions.

##### Ventilation and Warming.

There is no such immediate, indispensable necessary of life, as fresh air. A man may live for days, endure great hardships, and perform great labors, without food, without drink, or without sleep; but deprive him of air for only one minute, and all power of thought is extinct; he becomes as incapable of any intellectual operation as a dead man, and in a few minutes more, he is gone beyond resuscitation. Nor is this all;—but just in proportion as the stimulus of air is withheld, the whole system loses vigor. As the machinery in a water-mill slackens when the head of water is drawn down; as a locomotive loses speed if the fire be not seasonably replenished; just so do muscle, nerve, and faculty, faint and expire, if a sufficiency of vital air be not supplied to the lungs. As this Report is designed to produce actual results for the benefit of our children;—and it is said to be characteristic of our people, that they cannot be roused to action, until they see the reasons for it, nor restrained from action when they do, I shall proceed to state the facts, whether popular or scientific, which bear upon this important subject.

Reading from cards is also performed by primary classes, so placed; but books are also generally given to the pupils as early as may be. Other exercises are sometimes performed while the classes retain this position. It may be well before, closing this article, to notice the plan of a circulating class.

This term applies to a plan of promotion, or "going up," which has been thought to be free from the principal objection against the common mode of promoting. The spelling, or other exercise is performed in turn, going round and round, and the pupil does not stop at the head of the class, but passes over to the foot of it, while the one who occupies the latter station, takes his place at the head. The monitor or an assistant marks down the number of times which each pupil passes before the stand, and the way he moves; that is, up or down; and the amount is afterwards reported or recorded.

This plan, as we have remarked on a previous occasion has the advantage of bringing the missing child among the most successful, and thus tends to keep up his courage, and does not give so much room for the former to exercise bad feelings towards any of the latter in particular. Whether, on the whole, motives of rivalry and a spirit of emulation, had not better be altogether avoided, it must be left to each teacher to determine.

The common, or atmospheric air, consists mainly of two ingredients, one only of which is endued by the Creator with the power of sustaining animal life. The same part of the air supports life and sustains combustion; so that in wells or cellars, where a candle will go out; a man will die. The vital ingredient, which is called oxygen, constitutes about twenty-one parts in a hundred of the air. The other principal ingredient, called azote, will not sustain life. The proportion is adapted, by omniscient wisdom, with perfect exactness, to the necessities of the world. Were there any material diminution of the oxygen, other things remaining the same, every breathing thing would languish and waste, and perish. Were there much more of it, it would stimulate the system, accelerating every bodily and mental operation, so that the most vigorous man would wear out in a few weeks or days. This will be readily understood by all who have witnessed the effects of breathing exhilarating gas, which is nothing but this oxygen or vital portion of the air, sorted out and existing in a pure state. Besides, this oxygen is the supporter of combustion, and, were its quantity greatly increased, fire would hardly be extinguishable, even by water. But the vital and the non-vital parts of the air are wisely mingled in the exact proportions, best fitted for human utility and enjoyment; and all our duty is not to disturb these proportions. About four parts of the twenty-one of vital air are destroyed at every breath; so that, if one were to breathe the same air four or five times over, he would substantially exhaust the life-giving principle in it, and his bodily functions would convulse for a moment and then stop. As the blood and the air meet each other in the lungs, not only is a part of the vital air destroyed, but a poisonous ingredient is generated. This poison constitutes about three parts in a hundred of the breath thrown out



from the lungs. Nor is it a weak, slow poison, but one of fatal virulence and sudden action. If the poisonous parts be not regularly removed, (and they can be removed only by inhaling fresh air,) the blood absorbs them, and carries them back into the system. Just according to the quantity of poison, forced back into the blood, follow the consequences of lassitude, faintness or death. The poisonous parts are called carbonic acid. They are heavier than the common air, and as the lungs throw them out at the lips, their tendency is to fall towards the ground or the floor of a room, and if there were no currents of the air, they would do so. But the other parts of the air being warmed in the lungs and rarified, are lighter than the common air, and the moment they pass from the lips, their tendency is to rise upwards towards the sky. Were these different portions of the air as they come from the lungs of different colors;—we should, if in a perfectly still atmosphere, see the stream divided, part of it falling and part ascending. A circulation of the air, however, produced out-of-doors by differences of temperature, and in our apartments by the motion of their occupants and by other causes, keeps the poisonous parts of the air, to some extent, mingled with the rest of it, and creates the necessity of occasionally changing the whole. Though the different portions of the air have the same color to the bodily eye, yet in the eye of reason their qualities are diametrically opposite.

Although there is but the slightest interval between one act of breathing and another, yet, in the natural state of things, before we can draw a second breath, the air of the first is far beyond our reach, and never returns, until it has gone the circuit of nature, and been renovated. Such are the silent and sublime operations, going on day and night, without intermission, all round the globe, for all the myriads of breathing creatures that inhabit it. But, perhaps some will suppose, that, in this way, the vital portion of the air, in process of time, will be wholly consumed or used up; or that the poisonous portion, thrown off from the lungs, will settle and accumulate, upon the earth's surface, and rise around us, like a flood of water, so high as eventually to flow back into the lungs and inflict death. All this may be done; not however in the course of nature, but only by suicidal or murderous contrivances. In the Black Hole of Calcutta, in the year 1756, one hundred and forty-six persons were confined to a room only eighteen feet square for ten hours; and although there was one aperture for the admission of air and light, 123 had perished at the end of that time. Only 23 survived, and several of these were immediately seized with the typhus fever. In the Dublin Hospital, during the four years preceding 1785, out of 7650 children, 2944 died, within a fortnight after their birth; that is, 38 out of every hundred. The cause of this almost unexampled mortality was suspected by Dr. Clarke, the physician, who caused fresh air to be introduced by means of pipes, and during the three following years, the deaths were only 165 out of 4243, or less than four in a hundred; that is, a diminution in the proportion of deaths of more than 34 per cent. Hence it appears, that, though a proficiency of pure air, in one hospital, during the space of four years, there perished more than 2600 children. In Naples, Italy, there is a grotto, where carbonic acid issues from the earth and flows along the bottom in a shallow stream. Dogs are kept by the guides who conduct travellers to see this natural curiosity, and, for a small fee, they thrust the noses of the dogs into the gas. The consequence is that the dogs are immediately seized with convulsions, and, if not released, they die in five minutes. But let us not cry, *Shame!* too soon on those who are guilty of this sordidness and cruelty. We are repeating every day, though in rather a milder fashion, the same experiment, except we use children instead of dogs.

But why, in process of time, it may still be asked, is not the vital principle of the air wholly exhausted; and the valleys and plains of the earth, at least, filled with the fatal one? Again, Divine Wisdom has met the exigency in a manner fitted to excite our admiration and wonder. The vegetable world requires for its growth the very substance which the animal world rejects as its death; and in its turn, all vegetable growth yields a portion of oxygen for the support of animal life. One flourishes upon that which is fatal to the other. Thus the equilibrium is forever restored; or rather it is never disturbed. They exchange poison for aliment; death for life; and the elements of a healthy existence flow round in a circle forever. The deadly poison thrown from the lungs of the inhabitants of our latitudes, in the depths of winter, is borne in the great circuit of the atmosphere to the tropical region and is there converted into vegetable growth; while the oxygen exhaled in the processes of tropical vegetation, mounts the same car of the winds, and in its appointed time revisits the higher latitudes. Why should we violently invade this beautiful arrangement of Providence?

There is another fact, impossible to be overlooked in considering this subject. Who can form any just conception of the quantity of air which has been created? Science has demonstrated, that it is poured out between 40 and 50 miles deep all round the globe. It was to prevent the necessity of our using it, *second-hand*, that it was given to us by skyfulls. Then, again, it is more liquid than water.

It rushes into every nook and crevice, and fills every unoccupied place upon the earth's surface. All the powers of art fail in wholly excluding it from any given space. We cannot put our organs of breathing, where some of it will not reach them. All we can do is to corrupt it, so that none but fatal or noxious air shall reach them. This we do. Now if the air were a product of human pains-taking; if laborers sweated or slaves groaned to prepare it; if it were transported by human toil from clime to clime, like articles of export and import, between foreign countries, at a risk of property and life; if there were ever any dearth, or scarcity of it; if its whole mass could be monopolized, or were subject to accident or conquest, then, economy might be commendable. But ours is a parsimony of the inexhaustible. We are prodigals of health, of which we have so little, and niggards of air of which we have so much. In the State Lunatic Hospital at Worcester, there are 800 feet cubic measure to each apartment, for one patient only. In the Prison at Charlestown, 171 1-2 cubic feet are allowed to each prisoner's cell. In addition to this, free ingress and egress of the air is allowed, by means of apertures and flues in the walls. In the Penitentiary, erected at Philadelphia a few years since, 1300 cubic feet were allowed to each prisoner, solitarily confined; while in some of our school rooms, less than forty cubic feet is allowed to a scholar, without any proper means of ventilation; and in one case a school has been constantly kept, for 13 years, in a room which allows less than 30 feet of air to the average number of scholars, now attending it; and even this school room, contracted as it is, is besieged by such offensive effluvia, that the windows are scarcely opened even in summer.

In regard to this most immediate of all the necessities of life, that arrangement would be perfect, which should introduce the life-sustaining air, just as fast as it should be wanted for breathing; and, when breathed, should carry it off, not to be breathed again, until it should be renovated and purified in the laboratory of nature. If one washes himself in running water, he will never dip up the same water a second time. So should it be with the air we respire. An arrangement, producing this effect is perfectly practicable and easy. By examining a most valuable communication from Dr. Woodward, the superintendent of the Lunatic Hospital at Worcester, it will appear, that 50 persons will consume the entire body of air in a room 30 feet square and 9 feet high, in about forty minutes. If, however, the room be perfectly tight, the air, once respired, will be partially mingled with the whole mass of air in the room and will offer itself to be breathed again. What is wanted, therefore, is a current of fresh air flowing into the room, while a current of the respired air flows out of it; both to be equal to the quantity required for the occupants. Under such circumstances, if there be but little motion in the room, the poisonous part of the air will settle towards the floor as soon as it is cast from the lungs, while the other part of it, being raised almost to a blood heat in the lungs will rise to the ceiling. In the ceiling, therefore, should be an aperture for its escape. The carbonic acid will tend to flow out under the door or when it is opened. If the ceiling be concave or dome-shaped, only one aperture will be necessary;—if horizontal and the room be large several may be required. The number will depend upon the manner in which the room is heated. If the house be of one story only, the apertures will open into the attic. On the upper side of the aperture let a trap-door be hung, to be raised by a cord, running over a pulley, and coming down into the room, or, (which is more simple) by wires, after the manner of house-bells. This door should be prevented from opening to a greater angle than 80 degrees, so that when the cord is loosened it will fall by its own weight and close the orifice. The door will be opened, more or less, according to the temperature of the weather, and the degree of wind prevailing without, so as always to carry off the impure air just as fast as it is fouled by the lungs. Any person, by stepping into the open air, and inhaling it for half a minute, can, on returning into the room, determine the state of the air within it. If the apertures through the ceiling open into the attic, the air can be let off, either through fan-windows at the ends, or through sky-lights; or an opening can be made into the chimney and a flue carried up to its top. In the last case, the floor of the attic, immediately under the flue, should be plastered, or covered with something incombustible, to make it perfectly secure against cinders, coming down through the flue. If the building be two stories high, the apertures for ventilation in the lower story, instead of being in the upper ceiling of the room, should be in the side walls, next the ceiling and so ascend, by flues, through the walls of the second story until they open into the attic. Sliding dampers can be used, in order to open or close these lower orifices, so as to regulate the escape of air from the room. Where a school-house two stories in height has been built in disregard of the laws of health and life, the lower room may be ventilated by making apertures in its upper ceiling, next to the walls of the room, and carrying up flues through the second story in tight boxes, attached to the walls and opening into the attic through similar apertures in the upper ceiling of the second story. These boxes will appear, in

the second story, to be only casing of posts or pilasters, and will not materially disfigure the room.

The best apparatus for expelling foul air from a room consists in the proper means of introducing a supply of fresh warm air. Undoubtedly, the best mode of warming a room is to have a cellar under it, and to place a furnace in the cellar. Some place of storing wood seems indispensable for every school-house, and a cellar could ordinarily be dug and stoned as cheaply as a wood-house could be built. I suppose, also, that a school-house would be much less exposed to take fire from a furnace well set, than from a common fire place or stove. But the great advantage of warming by a furnace is, that all parts of the room are kept at the same temperature. The air presses outward instead of inward, through every crack and crevice in door or window. No scholars are injured by being forced to sit in the vicinity of a stove or fire place; nor is any part of the room encumbered by either. When the latter are used, many scholars, who sit in exposed situations, will spend half an hour a day and often more, in going to the fire to warm themselves; and, in addition to those, whose comfort requires them to go, idlers, from all sides of the house, will make a rendezvous or halfway place, for visiting. With an unequal division of heat in a school warmed by a stove or fire place, I believe it is always true, that diligent scholars will stay in their seats and suffer, while the lazy will go to the fire to drone. Some other advantages of setting a furnace in a cellar to warm a school, are mentioned in the excellent communication of Dr. Woodward, above referred to. Feet can be warmed or dried at the orifices for admitting the heated air from the furnace as well as at a stove. There may be two of these orifices, one for the boys and one for the girls. The setting of a furnace requires some skill and science. We often meet with a prejudice against furnaces, which belongs not to the furnaces themselves, but to the ignorance of those who set them. There seems to be no objection, except it be that of appearance, against setting the furnace so high in the cellar, as that its brick or soapstone top shall be on a level with the floor of the room and constitute a part of it.

If a common stove must be used for warming the room, then let it be enclosed in a case of sheet iron, rising from the floor on three sides of the stove and bending over it; not, however, so as to close over its top, but leaving an opening in the case greater or less, according to the size of the stove and of the room. The sides of the case should be two or three inches from the sides of the stove. The stove should stand on legs a few inches from the floor, and fresh air should be introduced from out of doors and conducted under the stove in a tube or trough, which, as it rises around the stove, will be warmed and enter the room through the opening in the case at the top. A slide in the tube or trough will regulate the quantity of air to be admitted. The sensations, experienced in a room into which the external air is directly introduced and warmed in its passage, belong to a class entirely distinct from those engendered by air warmed in the ordinary way. They will be grateful to the pupils and will promote elasticity and vigor of mind. It would be well to place the stove directly in the current of air caused by opening the door.

The common expedient of letting down windows from the top, so that the noxious air may escape and the vacuum be filled with the pure, accomplishes the object in a very imperfect, and at the same time, an objectionable manner. If there be any wind abroad, or, if there be a great difference in temperature, between the external air and air of the room, the former rushes in with great violence and mingles with the heated and corrupted air, so that unless several room-fuls of air be admitted, a portion of that which has been rendered unfit for use, will still remain, while some that has been partially warmed will escape. But the greatest objection is that the cold air drops like a shower bath upon the scholar's head;—a mode which all agree in pronouncing unhealthful and sometimes dangerous.

#### Size.

In addition to the size of the rooms, it may be observed, generally, that in addition to the room requisite for seats and desks, as described below, there should be an open space all round the walls, at least two feet and a half in width, besides room for common recitations, and for the teacher's desk. Seats may be attached to the walls for the accommodation of visitors, or for the scholars, should it ever be desirable for any purpose, to arrange them in a continuous line. Moveable benches may be provided,—instead of seats fastened to the wall,—to be taken away, when not wanted for use, and so to leave that space entirely unoccupied. Joseph Lancaster, in making arrangement for great numbers of the children of the poor, where cheapness was a main object, allows nine feet area on the floor, to each scholar. His rooms were 15 or 20 feet high. If only 15 feet high, an area of 9 feet would give 135 cubic feet of space to each scholar; and 135 cubic feet in a room 10 feet high, would give to each scholar an area of 4 feet in length and almost 3 1-2 feet in width. Even at this rate a family of 6 persons would have a room only about 8 feet by 10.

#### Desks, Seats, &c.

It seems to be a very prevalent opinion, at the present day amongst all professional teachers, that seats, on a horizontal floor, are preferable to those which rise on the sides or at the end of a room, or both, in the form of an amphitheatre. And it is obviously a great fault in the construction of a room, if, when the class is brought upon the floor to recite, the teacher is obliged to turn his back upon the school, when he looks at the class, or upon the class when he looks at the school. A level floor also increases the space for air, and as the room is warmed downward, it makes the temperature more equable. The seats with desks should be arranged in parallel lines, lengthwise of the room, with aisles between, each seat to accommodate one scholar only. Although it would be better, that they should be moveable, yet as this cannot, perhaps, ordinarily be done for district schools, the front side of one seat may be the back of the next in the row. Eighteen inches is, perhaps, a suitable width for the aisles. Each desk should be two feet long, and not less than one foot and six inches wide. A width of one foot and nine inches would be better. In some houses, the seats connected with single desks are one foot square, and placed behind the middle of the desks; in others the seats are one foot wide and as long as the desks. It may be sometimes desirable to place two scholars temporarily on the same seat, as for the purpose of reading from the same book. The former arrangement would make this impracticable. The children will sit more easily and more upright, if the back of the seats slope a little from them, at the shoulder blades; and also, if the seats themselves incline a little—the front part being a little the highest. The forward part of the desk should be level for about three or four inches. The residue should have a slight inclination. A slope of an inch and a half in a foot would, probably, be sufficient. It should not be so great, as that books and slates would slide off. For the deposit of books, &c. there may be a shelf under the desk, or the desk may be a box, with a cover, hung upon hinges for a lid. The first method supersedes the necessity of raising a lid, by which books, pencils, &c. are sometimes thrown upon the floor or upon the front neighbor. The shelf, however, is far less convenient, and the contents as liable to be perpetually dropped out. The box and lid on the whole seem much preferable, the sloping part of the cover to constitute the lid. For the security of the desks, locks and keys are sometimes used. But the keys will occasionally be lost, by accident; and sometimes, by bad scholars, on purpose. Besides, what appalling images turing the mind, at the reflection, that the earliest associations of children in regard to the security of property amongst themselves, must be of locks and hiding places, instead of honesty and justice! The board which makes the front of one seat and the back of the next should rise, perhaps a couple of inches above the level of the horizontal part of the desk, to prevent things from sliding off forwards. Into this horizontal part of the desk, the inkstands may be let; so loosely, however, as to allow of their being taken out to be filled; and so deep, that their tops will be on a level with the desks. They may be covered, either with a metallic lid, resembling a butt hinge, to rise and fall; or, which is better, with a common slide, or with a flat circular piece of pewter, having a stem projecting on one side, like the stem of a watch, through which a nail or screw may be driven, not tightly, but so that the cover may be made to slide over or off the orifice of the inkstand, on the nail or screw, as a hinge.

In regard to the height of the seats, it is common to give exact measurements. But inflexible rules will never fit varying circumstances. Some school rooms are for females; others for boys only. In factory villages, usually, a great proportion of the scholars are young; while, in one county in the state, great numbers of the males attending school, during the winter term, are more than 16 years of age. To follow unvarying rules, therefore, would aggrrieve as many as it would accommodate. But the principles to be observed are few and capable of a definite exposition. A live child cannot be expected to sit still, unless he has a support to his back, and a firm resting place for his feet. As a scholar sits upright in his seat, the knee joint forming a right angle and the feet being planted horizontally on the floor, no pressure whatever should come upon the thigh bone where it crosses the edge of the seat. If obliged to sit upon too high a seat, a foot board or block should always be provided for the feet to rest upon. Children sometimes go to school at an age when many of their bones are almost as limber as a green withe, when almost any one of the numerous joints in the body may be loosened or distorted.

The height of the seats and desks should of course be graduated, to fit the different sizes of the scholars; the smallest scholars sitting nearest the teacher's desk.

The arrangement of seats without desks, for small scholars, when needed, is too obvious to require any explanation. Their proper position will depend upon the other arrangements of the school room. Long benches, having separate chair-shaped seats, but with a continuous back, are sometimes used.

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the general construction of the house. It should be such as to encourage habits of neatness and order.

The instructor's desk should be upon a platform, raised so high as to give him a view of the persons of the pupils above their desks. When the school is not large, it should be at the end of the room. It should overlook the play-ground. Cases for the deposit and preservation of the apparatus and library should be near the desk, except where a separate apartment is provided. A teacher without apparatus,—however numerous may be his books,—is like a mechanic with but half a set of tools.

The average number of scholars in the schools in Massachusetts is about fifty. When the school is large, there should be a separation of the older from the younger children, and the latter, at least, placed under the care of a female teacher. The opinion is almost universal, in this state, that female teaching for young children is, in every respect, superior to male. If the number of the older scholars be large, there should be a separate recitation room, and a door, and an entry for the entrance and accommodation of each sex.

In very large schools, it may be thought expedient to have desks, sufficiently long to accommodate six or more scholars, with chairs, fastened to the floor for seats, and a space between the chairs and the next tier of desks, for passing in and out. In such cases, the desks may be placed longitudinally, and the teacher's platform for himself and assistants extends the whole length of the room, in front of them.

#### Windows.

The windows should be such, as to furnish sufficient light at all times, and means provided for excluding any excess. Window-blinds and curtains, therefore, are essential. The transitions of light in the open air are very great; but it is to be observed, that there is no out-of-door occupation, which severely task the eye. But in a school room, without blinds or curtains, when the sun is allowed to shine directly upon a child's head, book or desk, the transition is greater and more sudden than in the open air; while, at the same time, the eye, being intensely engaged in looking at minute objects, has its pupil widely distended, so that the greatest quantity of light falls upon the optic nerve.

The following is extracted from a lecture, delivered by Dr. Edward Reynolds of Boston, before the American Institute of Instruction in 1833. "How much talent lies dormant by the morbidly sensitive eyesight, occasioned by inordinate and untimely use of the eyes! The last mentioned evil is increasing to a fearful amount among the young. Accurate inquiries have convinced me, that a large number of these individuals must go back to the school room to find the source of their infirmities."

In order that passing, out-door objects and events may not draw off the attention of the scholars, it is usually recommended to insert the windows so high, that such objects and events will be invisible in the school room. It cannot, however, be denied, that this gives to the room a prison or cellar-like appearance. May not such interruptions be better avoided by selecting a retired situation and by arranging the seats, so that the scholars shall sit facing from the road? Nor can there be any necessity of having the windows very high for this purpose. As scholars sit in their seats, the eyes of but few will be more than three feet and a half from the floor. This would allow of windows six feet deep in a room ten feet high. So, too, it would be a perfect security against the evil, if the lower sash or the lowest part of it were glazed with ground glass. The windows should be made so that the upper sash can be lowered. This may be very desirable in summer, independently of the considerations, above urged, in regard to ventilation.

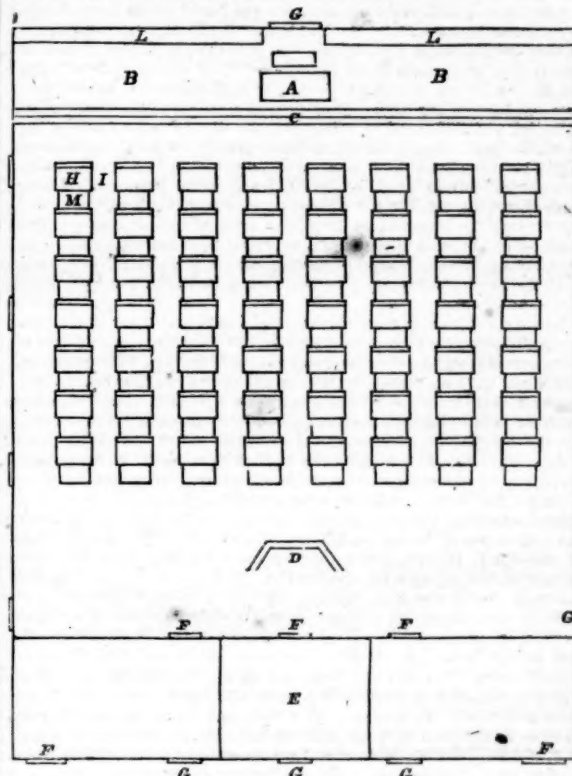
#### Location.

Build it where some sheltering hill or wood mitigates the inclemency of winter; where a neighboring grove tempers the summer heat, furnishing cool and shady walks; remove it a little from the public highway and from buildings where noisy and clattering trades are carried on; and, above all, rescue it from sound or sight of all resorts for license and dissipation, and a sensibility to beauty, a purity of mind, a sentiment of decency and propriety will be developed and fostered, and the chances of elevated feelings and correct conduct in after life will be increased manifold. Habits of mental order and propriety are best cherished amidst external order and propriety. It is a most beautiful trait in the character of children, that they take the keenest delight in the simplest pleasures. Their desires do not tax commerce for its luxuries, nor exhaust wealth for its embellishments. Such pleasures as are imparted by the cheerful light and the quickening air, by the way-side flowers, the running stream, or the music of birds, are sufficient for the more gentle and pensive; and the impetuous and exuberant of spirit only want a place to let off the redundant activity of their arms and legs. And how cheaply can these sources of gratification be purchased. Sometimes a little of the spirit of compromise; sometimes a little forgetfulness of strifes among the parents, engendered on other subjects, would secure to the children the double boon of utility and enjoy-

ment. Yet how often are the unoffending children ground between the collisions of their parents!

#### Plan of School House.

The following is a representation of the interior of a school room, constructed according to Mr. Mann's recommendations.



#### EXPLANATIONS.

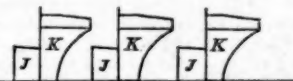
- A represents the Teacher's Desk.
- B B Teacher's Platform, from 1 to 2 feet in height.
- C Step for ascending the Platform.
- L L Cases for Books, Apparatus, Cabinet, &c.
- H Pupils' single Desks, 2 feet by 18 inches.
- M Pupils' Seats, 1 foot by 20 inches.
- I Aisles, 1 foot 6 inches in width.
- D Place for Stove, if one be used.
- E Room for recitation, for retiring in case of sudden indisposition, for interviews with parents, when necessary, &c. It may, also be used for the Library, &c.
- F F F F F Doors into the boy's and girls entries—from the entries into the school room, and from the school room into the recitation room.
- G G G G Windows. The windows on the sides are not lettered.

\* The seats for small scholars, without desks, if needed to be movable, and placed as the general arrangement of the school shall render convenient.

\* Where there is but one teacher, the space between the desks and the entries are to be used for recitation. Here, also is the place for black boards, whether movable or attached to the wall. This space should be 8, 10, or 12 feet wide, according to the size of the school.

\* The height of the room should never be less than 10 or 12 feet.

\* The following is designed to represent an end view of the pupils' Desks and Seats.



\* J represents the Pupils' Seats, and K the shape of the board or plank which forms the side and support of the desks.

\* A light green is perhaps the best color for the scholars' desks and seats, as it is more grateful than any other to the eye. For the outside of the house, white is the color most universally pleasing.

*Yards or Play Grounds.*

On this subject, I have never seen, nor am I able to prepare, any thing so judicious, and apposite to the condition of the Districts in Massachusetts, as the following paragraphs, taken from a Report, published in 1833, "by order of the Directors of the Essex County Teachers' Association."

"As the situation should be pleasant and healthful, so there should be sufficient space around the building. With the number who ordinarily attend these institutions, not less than a quarter of an acre should ever be thought of as a space for their accommodation, and this should be enclosed from the public highway, so as to secure it from cattle, that the children may have a safe and clean place for exercises at recess and at other times. Every school-house lot should be large enough for the rational exercise which the children ought to have, and will take. It would be well to have it large enough to contain some ornamental and fruit trees with flower borders, which we know children may be taught to cultivate and enjoy; and by an attention to which their ideas of property, and common rights, and obligations, would become more distinct. By attention to what belonged to themselves, they would be kept from many of those wanton injuries too often done to the possessions of those near them.

"In by far the greater number of instances, there is no more ground than that which is occupied by the building; while many of them actually stand partly or wholly in the highway. The children, therefore, have no resort, but to the public highway, or the private property of their neighbors for amusement. Healthful and vigorous exercise is restrained, the modesty of nature is often outraged, and not unfrequently, a permanent and extensive injury done to the finer and better feelings, which ought, at that age, to be cultivated and confirmed by the most careful attention, not only as a great security from sin, but as a most lovely ornament through life. Besides this, there being no place for pleasant exercise for the boys out of doors, the school room, during the intermission at noon, becomes the place of noise and tumult, where not from any real intention, but in the forgetfulness of general excitement, gentlemanly and lady-like feelings are turned into ridicule, and an attempt to behave in an orderly and becoming manner, subjects the individual to no small degree of persecution. We have often witnessed such instances, and known those who refused to engage in these rude exercises, forced out of the room and kept out during the greater part of an intermission, because, their example cast a damp upon a course of rude and boisterous conduct, in which they could not take a part. Whatever others may think, it is our belief that this noise and tumult is in a great measure the natural overflowing of youthful buoyancy, which, were it allowed to spend itself in out-door amusements, would hardly every betray itself improperly in the house."

**DR. WOODWARD ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOL HOUSES.**

The following is the valuable letter of Dr. Woodward to Mr. Mann, referred to in the preceding columns.

*Dear Sir*—Your note and queries, respecting the construction of school houses, came to hand yesterday; I improve the earliest opportunity to reply.

First, as to the ill effects of high and narrow benches, and seats without backs.

High and narrow seats are not only extremely uncomfortable for the young scholar, tending constantly to make him restless and noisy, disturbing his temper, and preventing his attention to his books, but they also have a direct tendency to produce deformity of the limbs.

If the seat is too narrow, half the thigh only rests upon it: if too high, the feet cannot reach the floor; the consequence is that the limbs are suspended on the centre of the thigh. Now, as the limbs of children are pliable or flexible, they are easily made to grow out of shape, and become crooked by such an awkward and unnatural position.

Seats without backs, have an equally unfavorable influence upon the spinal column. If no rest is afforded the backs of children while seated, they almost necessarily assume a bent and crooked position; such a position often assumed, or long continued, tends to that deformity, which has become extremely common with children in modern times—that leads to disease of the spine in innumerable instances, especially with delicate female children.

The seats in school rooms should be so constructed that the whole thigh can rest upon them, and at the same time the foot stand firmly upon the floor; all seats should have backs high enough to reach the shoulder blades; low backs, although better than none, are far less easy and useful than high ones, and will not prevent pain and uneasiness after sitting a considerable time. Young children should be permitted to change their position often, to stand on their feet, to march and visit the play ground. One hour is as long as any

child, under ten years of age, should be confined at once; and four hours as long as he should be confined to his seat in one day.

*Second Query*—"What general effects will be produced upon the health of children by stinting their supply of fresh air, through defects in ventilation?"

An answer to this query, will involve some chemical principles, in connexion with the animal economy, not extensively and fully understood.

The blood, as it circulates through the vessels in our bodies, accumulates a deleterious principle called CARBON, which is a poison itself, and must be discharged frequently, or it becomes dangerous to life. In the process of respiration or breathing, this poisonous principle unites in the lungs with a proportion of the oxygen of the air, and forms carbonic acid, which is expelled from the lungs at each expiration. The proportion of oxygen in the air received into the lungs, is about twenty-one in the hundred: in the air expelled, about eighteen in the hundred;—the proportion of carbonic acid in the inhaled air is one part in the hundred, in the exhaled air about four parts in the hundred. By respiration, an adult person spoils, or renders unfit for this vital process, about one gallon of air in a minute. By this great consumption of pure air in a school room, made tight and filled with scholars, it will be easily seen that the whole air will soon be rendered impure, and unfit for the purpose for which it is designed. If we continue to inhale this contaminated air, rendered constantly worse the longer we are confined in it, this process in the lungs will not be performed in a perfect manner; the carbon will not all escape from the blood, but will be circulated to the brain, and produce its deleterious effects upon that organ, to which it is a poison. If no opportunity be afforded for its regular escape, death will take place in a few minutes, as in strangulation by a cord, drowning, and immersion in irrespirable air. The cause of death, is the retention and circulation of this poisonous principle, in all these cases.

If a smaller portion is allowed to circulate through the vessels than will prove fatal, it produces stupor, syncope, and other dangerous effects upon the brain and nerves. In still less quantity, it produces dulness, sleepiness, and incapacitates us for all mental efforts and physical activity. The dulness of a school, after having been long in session in a close room, and of a congregation, during a protracted religious service, are often attributable to this cause mainly, if not solely. Both teacher and scholar, preacher and hearer, are often greatly affected in this way, without being at all sensible of the cause. Fifty scholars will very soon contaminate the air of a school room at the rate of a gallon a minute.

Suppose a school room to be thirty feet square and nine feet high, it will contain 13,996,000 cubic inches of atmospheric air. According to Davy and Thompson, two accurate and scientific chemists, one individual respires and contaminates 6500 cubic inches of air in a minute. Fifty scholars will respire 325,000 cubic inches in the same time. In about forty minutes, all the air of such a room will have become contaminated, if fresh supplies are not provided. The quantity of carbonic acid produced by the respiration of fifty scholars, will be about 750 cubic inches in an hour.

From these calculations, we must see how soon the air of a school room becomes unfit to sustain the animal powers, and how unfavorable to vigorous mental effort such a contaminated atmosphere must prove to be. To avoid this most serious evil, is a desideratum, which has not yet been reached in the construction of school houses.

In my opinion, every house and room which is closed for any considerable time upon a concourse of people, should be warmed by pure air from out-of-doors, heated by furnaces placed in a cellar, (and every school house should have a cellar,) or in some contiguous apartment, so that the supply of air from the fire should not be from the school room. Furnaces for warming external air, may be constructed cheaply, so as effectually to answer the purposes of warmth and ventilation.

When a quantity of warm fresh air is forced into a school room by means of a furnace, the foul air is forced out at every crevice, and at the ventilating passages—the currents are all warm quite to these passages.

But if the room is warmed by a stove or fireplace, the cold air from without rushes in at every passage and every crevice, and while the parts of the body nearest the fire are too warm, the current of cold air rushing to the fire to sustain the combustion, keep all the other parts cold and uncomfortable. This is a most direct way to produce disease; nothing can affect the system more unfavorably than currents of cold air coming upon us when quite warm.

I have said that school houses should have cellars under them. The floor of a building without a cellar is always cold, and often damp; this tends to keep the feet of scholars cold, while the head, in a region of air much warmer, will be kept hot. This is both unnatural and unhealthy. The feet should always be kept warm and the head cool. No person can enjoy good health whose feet are habitually cold. In school rooms heated by stoves, the feet are very

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liable to be cold, while the upper stratum of air, kept hot and dry by a long reach of pipe, produces a very unpleasant and unfavorable state of the head—headache, vertigo and syncope often take place in such a room.

The human body is so constituted, that it can bear almost any degree of heat or cold, if the change be not too sudden, and all parts of it be subject to it alike. We find no particular inconvenience from respiring air at the temperature of 90 degrees on the one hand, or at zero on the other; but inequalities of temperature at the same time, affect us very differently, and can never be suffered for a long time without danger.

There is one consideration in the preparation of furnaces for warming rooms, that should not be overlooked. The object should be to force into the room a large quantity of air heated a few degrees above the temperature required, rather than a small quantity at a much higher temperature. The air chamber should be capacious, and the passages free. The air should always be taken from out of doors, and never from a cellar. The air of a cellar is often impure itself, and, if pure, a cellar that is at all tight cannot furnish an adequate supply. The whole air of a school room should be changed at least every hour; if oftener, it would be better. If a cellar is not much larger than the room above it, this supply will soon be exhausted also. The air of the cellar may be sufficient to supply the combustion of the fuel; this is all it should do—and for this purpose it is better than air from out of doors, as the coldness of this checks the heat, and diminishes the temperature of the fire, and its power of heating the furnace.

In giving my views on this subject, I have been so desultory as to embrace nearly all that I can say on other queries proposed to me. At any rate, my letter is already of an unreasonable length, and I must come to a close. Wishing you every success in the arduous duties of your present station,

I remain truly and affectionately yours,

S. B. WOODWARD.

#### SCHOOL LESSON ON LYING.

1. Some persons do not understand the distinction between deceit and lying. But there is a difference; for there are some children who will contrive ways to deceive others, who would not tell a direct lie.

2. A lie is the worst kind of deceit. It is *telling what is known to be false, with an intention to deceive.*

3. Sometimes children are told that it is always wrong to say what is not true, and a lie is often said to be *telling an untruth.* But a child may say what is not true, from mistake or ignorance, and this is not a lie, and is not necessarily wrong.

4. For example, a little boy came in, and his mother asked him where his father was, and he answered "in the garden." Now this was not the truth; but the child did not tell a lie, because he had left his father in the garden, and supposed he was still there. It was not a lie, for the child supposed it was true, and had no intention to deceive.

5. There is another kind of deceit which many consider not exactly the same as lying: and some persons allow themselves to practice it without fully understanding that it is really the worst kind of lying. As an example, a man once told his neighbor that he saw his clergyman half shaved. In that part of the country, this expression, when said in a certain tone and manner, conveyed the idea that a man was half intoxicated. Now the man who said this, really saw the clergyman when he was shaving himself, and was only half done; and he told what was true in one sense, in such a manner as to convey a false idea. What he said was, therefore, false in the sense it conveyed, and it was said with the intention to deceive. This made it a lie; and this is one of the most pernicious methods of lying. It is using the semblance of truth for the purpose of deceit, and is greatly calculated to injure the artless and honest; and there is, perhaps, no other species of lying so fatally suited, by destroying mutual confidence, to derange and break up society.

6. There are two things, then, that make a lie; the first is, *saying what we know is false,* and the second is, *saying it with an intention to deceive.*

7. Though there are many cases in which deceit is as bad as a lie, yet there are some cases where it is not; such, for instance, as when we deceive in sport. Children should be taught to feel that in all cases it is exceedingly wicked to lie. There are other reasons why they need to understand the difference between deceit and lying.

8. There are some cases in which children find some kind of

deceit practised even by good people, and are told by them that it is not wrong. Now if they believe that deceit and lying are the same thing, they will be led to suppose in such cases, that good people set them an example of lying, and that such persons believe that it is right sometimes to tell lies. This will have a very bad influence upon children, who ought to feel that it is always wrong to lie; and that to tell a lie is a most vile and wicked act.

9. A child who tries to deceive, does wrong, and is a disagreeable child, even if he will not tell a direct lie; but those who will tell lies must be despised and disliked by every one. All persons regard lying as wicked and contemptible.

10. And there is no crime which God more plainly points out as odious and abominable. He says expressly, "lying lips are an abomination to the Lord."

11. Every person does wrong in charging others with falsehood and lying, until he has evidence that they have said what they *knew* was false, and that they said it *with an intention to deceive.* And it is so very difficult for us to ascertain how much knowledge other persons have, or what their intentions are, that we should be very cautious in charging any one with telling lies. When we find others saying what is false, we ought to say that they are in a mistake, and never charge them with lying till we can show that they said what they *knew* was false, with the *intention* to deceive.

12. Those who are always ready to believe the worst of others, instead of hoping for the best, will find the world full of liars; but those who have that charity that "thinketh no evil," when they find persons saying what is not true, will always hope that there is a mistake somewhere, and rarely find occasion for charging others with so mean and wicked a practice as lying.

13. Children should always be careful how they suspect others of lying. When they hear others say what is not true, they never should charge them with lying, till they have found out that they told what they knew to be false, with the intention to deceive.

14. One reason why it is so very wicked to tell lies is, that much of the comfort and happiness of life depends on our being able to trust in what others say. What a dreadful situation we should be in, if no one knew when others told the truth! All trade and business would stop, because men could not believe each other when they promised to pay, nor believe those things, which they now learn from others, respecting their business. Parents could not believe children; masters could not trust servants; employers could not trust those they hire; tradesmen could not trust their customers; the sick could not trust in their physicians; people could not believe their clergyman; every one would be distrustful, anxious, and miserable.

15. There are some cases when men make promises, which afterwards they are obliged to break; and it is necessary for children to know that in these cases, they are not guilty of lying. The following are some of the cases in which men may break a promise without doing wrong.

16. Suppose a man tells his son that if he will learn his lessons well, he may ride on a little pony with him. The child learns his lesson, but when the time comes, the pony is injured, so that he cannot be used. Here the father does not do wrong in not keeping his promise, *because it is impossible to keep it.* When we make promises in this way, it is always understood that there may some accident prevent, and it is not necessary, therefore, always to say it; we always mean when we promise to do a thing that we will do it, if nothing happens to prevent, as much as if we said so; and it is so understood by all to whom we make a promise.

17. There is another case when it would be right to break a promise. A father sends home some beautiful oranges, and the mother promises her little girl she shall have one when she has finished a certain task. But soon after, she finds that the servant made a mistake, and that the oranges belong to another person. Now, it would be wrong to take what belongs to others, and therefore it would be wrong to keep the promise. We are not bound, therefore, to keep promises which would lead us to do what is wrong.

18. There is one other case in which it is right to break a promise. Suppose a beggar comes and tells a pitiful story of his misery, and asks for charity. The lady who hears him tells him to come to-morrow, and she will give him some money. But before the time comes, she finds that he is an impostor,

and that all his story is a lie. In such a case, she is not bound to keep her promise; and the reason is, that she made the promise, supposing a thing to be true which was false. In all similar cases, when a promise is made, where the one who promises is deceived, or mistaken about the truth, he does right in not keeping the promise.

19. In all such cases as these, it is wrong to charge others with falsehood or lying, because they do not keep their promises.—*Miss Beecher's Moral Instructor.*

#### THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

A meeting in behalf of the object of this Institution was recently held in Washington, of much national interest and importance. We extract from the *Christian Statesman* the following account of its proceedings:

On motion of the Hon. B. F. BUTLER, of New-York, the meeting was organized by calling to the Chair the Hon. JOSEPH STORY, of Massachusetts.

Mr. JUSTICE STORY, on taking the Chair, said: That he deeply regretted that the choice had not fallen upon some other person better qualified than himself to introduce to the meeting some exposition of the nature of the views and objects of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. No one, however, could well doubt that they were of great importance, and general interest, and entitled to the most favorable consideration of the public. The leading object of the Society was, as he understood it, to secure, through an extensive public patronage, the publication of a series of works of a moral, literary and scientific character, adapted to the wants of the American people, which by their extraordinary cheapness and excellence should aid the cause of education in our common schools, and carry home to the humblest cottage in the country, the means of intellectual improvement, and rational entertainment. It is well known that a society of a similar character has been for a number of years, established in England, under the auspices of Lord Brougham, and other gentlemen of distinguished rank and attainments, and that it has been eminently successful in its operations. Under its patronage, a series of Treatises have been compiled and published, not merely adapted to the wants of English society, but highly useful throughout the civilized world. They have found their way wherever commerce has extended the reach of human enterprise, and have no where been welcomed with more sincere satisfaction than in America, as a means of solid instruction, as well as of refined and elevated pleasure. The last age had been justly celebrated as the era of the establishment of Sunday Schools, by which moral and religious instruction have been widely diffused among the humblest classes of society, and thereby new barriers have been erected against the desolating inroads of infidelity and vice.

The present age may be truly characterized as the era of Education Societies, whose noble purpose it is to advance the common cause of learning, by elevating its standard, and refining its materials; and, at the same time, to warm and cheer the heart, by calling into more active play the powerful influences and consolations of religious truth. The moment is now arrived, when the efforts of such a Society are demanded from every quarter, to supply the increasing wants of the public.

It is the glory of my native State, that within the first eight years after the foundation of the colony, it created a system of instruction by the establishment of common schools, while the wilderness before our intrepid ancestors was as yet uncultivated, and the reluctant soil scarcely yielded the scantiest food for their pressing necessities—a system which not only furnished a model to all the neighboring colonies, but which at the distance of two hundred years still guides and directs the policy of that State—and yet, beneficent as have been the effects of this system, I may truly say, that no where in our country, more than in Massachusetts, will the importance of such an institution as that, which now solicits public attention, be more justly appreciated or more deeply felt. Indeed, if rightly conducted it cannot fail, essentially, to promote a higher and more intellectual Education, and spread farther and wider the beautiful lights of science, while it nourishes a sound and healthy literature, which will purify the taste, support the morals, and increase the happiness of the whole community.

Mr. G. D. ABBOTT, the Secretary of the Society, after explaining the origin of the Society, stated that the first great object of the Society was, the publication and general introduction of a National School Library. It is estimated that there are, at least fifty thousand schools in the United States, and it is now generally, if not universally, admitted, that every one should be supplied with an appropriate library. For this purpose, the Society proposed, from the outset, the publication of a series of popular works, upon all those branches of knowledge, most interesting and useful to the great body of the people;—including History, Voyages and Travels, Biography, Natural History, the Physical, Intellectual, Moral and Political Sciences, Agriculture, Manufactures, Arts, Commerce, Belles Lettres, the History and Philosophy of Education, and the Evidences of Christianity. It aims thus to bring before the minds of the entire population of the country, the richest means of social, intellectual, and moral improvement; and in the view of the Committee, there are few ways in which more extensive, substantial and lasting good can be conferred upon our country.

Who, for instance, can estimate the benefits to the present and the coming generation, from the wide-spread diffusion of the best productions of American or European minds, on the principles, the methods, and experiments of Agriculture?—Who can tell the advantage which would result to our whole land, from simply placing in the library of every school room, a practical treatise on the plans and principles of architecture? Who can foresee the impulse that would be given to the inventive genius of our countrymen, by placing within the reach of all, the discoveries of science, and its principles, as applicable to the mechanical purposes of life? In every point of view, the agricultural, the manufacturing, the commercial—ALL the interests of our country, seem to call for the action of this Institution, and to require its agency to accomplish for our people, what other instrumentalities are doing for European nations.

Mr. Chairman, the cost of placing a Library, like the one before us, in each of the 50,000 schools of our country, would be \$1,000,000. What sum will express the benefits?

If we consider alone its bearing upon our pecuniary interests, upon our national wealth, would it not be one of the most politic measures that could possibly be adopted? We have been told, by high authority, that the simple invention of the Cotton Gin, has been worth more than a hundred millions of dollars! The discoveries and experiments of Fulton, we all know, have been of priceless value! How many such inventions might we reasonably anticipate from the young and vigorous mind of this nation, with all the practical principles of science brought within its reach? Sir, the age of invention has not passed by.

But, I should not do justice to the objects of this institution, or to the feelings of its officers and friends, whom this delegation has the honor to represent, did I not say, that after all, the highest, the crowning good to be anticipated and desired, in the action of this Institution, is its influence on the intellectual improvement and moral culture of our people. The fundamental principle of the Society is, that the "Universal Diffusion of Knowledge, imbued with the spirit of Christianity, is indispensable for bringing any people to the full enjoyment of the best civil and social institutions;" and though, in every aspect of the subject, viewed in all its bearings, the proposed operations of the Society cannot but be of incalculable value; still its moral bearings are infinitely the most important.

It has been asked, by one, Mr. Chairman, I believe of your own State, who has thought much of the importance of training the youthful mind of this nation aright, "who would commit the harp to be tuned by an unskilful hand, if its notes were to vibrate forever!"

Sir, the young hearts of our rising-generation are immortal harps! and language cannot overstate the importance of their being tuned in unison with the high principles of morality and piety.

These immortal minds will act in sweet harmony, or, in dreadful discord—forever!

THE SUN is but a spark of fire,  
A transient meteor in the sky,  
The soul immortal as its sire,  
Can—never die!

But while these, sir, are I believe the views of the friends and



patrons of the Institution, I think I can unhesitatingly say, it has no political, no sectarian, no sectional, no party end whatever, to serve. Its objects are pure, national, and philanthropic; and it seems to us that they emphatically deserve the most cordial and efficient support of every lover of our country and of our fellow-men.

On motion of the Hon. A. F. BUTLER, it was

*Resolved*, That the design of elevating the character and extending the influence of public instruction in our country is worthy such an Institution; and that the plan of the American School Library, if executed as it ought to be, deserves the encouragement of all the legislatures of our States, and patronage of all the schools and institutions of learning in our land.

Mr. BUTLER, in offering this resolution, said he ventured to presume, that it expressed the sentiments of the meeting, in respect to that part of the design of the Society which related to the preparation of a Common School Library.

Before noticing the points presented in the resolution, he would congratulate the Chair, and every lover of knowledge and of our country, on the fact, that in the objects of the present meeting—the promotion of the great cause of General Education—a ground had been discovered on which persons from all quarters of the Union, and of every shade of political or religious sentiment, might meet and act together, in a spirit befitting the character of American citizens and patriots. However discordant or irreconcilable our opinions on other subjects may be, we all agree in this—that knowledge is indispensable to the preservation and usefulness of our institutions; and that it is the part of wisdom and of duty, by every means in our power, to extend its blessings to every corner of the land. The ground on which we are now assembled is, therefore, not merely common, but holy ground; it is good to stand upon it; the very atmosphere of the place in which we meet, is pure, serene and balmy—too much so for the existence of any feelings save those of patriotic brotherhood.

That the meeting might understand what had already been done by the Society, towards the preparation of a Library for Common Schools, and might see how entirely free from any sectarian or party bias its designs and doings were, Mr. BUTLER read the catalogue of the 50 volumes already published by the Messrs. Harpers, under the superintendence of the Society. Most of the works contained in this collection had been previously published by the Messrs. Harpers, as a portion of their Family Library; a part of them, however, he believed, had been prepared with some reference to this object, and all had been carefully examined by the Executive Committee before their adoption for it. In the infancy of the Institution, and under the pecuniary embarrassments which commenced soon after its organization, it had been found necessary to make use of the facilities which the Messrs. Harpers were capable of furnishing, in order to secure the foundation of the School Library with the promptitude demanded by the exigency of the case. If, therefore, it should appear to any, that the volumes already published were not in all respects such as could have been desired for an American Common School Library, Mr. Butler hoped it would be remembered, that the collection had been necessarily gotten up under adverse circumstances, which, if the Society was duly patronized, would not hereafter exist; and that it was but the *beginning* of a Library. He felt confident, too, that whatever might be the deficiencies of the selection already made, all would agree that it contained a large amount of entertaining and instructive reading; and that a greater national benefit could scarcely be accomplished, than to place it within the reach of every common school in the United States. Those especially, who, in early life, had experienced the disadvantages occasioned by a want of books, or by being obliged to resort to works of an inferior character, would not only concur in this sentiment, but would unite with him in the belief, that the circulation of this Library, imperfect even as it now is, throughout the country, would be hailed by the children and parents connected with our Common Schools, with intense delight; and would create a new era in the history of popular education. But if this be so, who can estimate the benefits which may be expected to result from the additions which may hereafter, from time to time, be made to this collection;—additions, many of which will be obtained from native writers, who will be enabled to adapt their productions

to the genius of our institutions, and the character of our people, as to make them instrumental of giving a new impulse, and a higher development, to American intellect?

It would seem almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of furnishing a due supply of suitable books for the use of our population, and especially of our youth. Books have been aptly called the food of the mind; and if of unsound and pernicious character, how injurious must be their effects? But it admits of no question, that the American mind, and especially in the youthful portion of our people, must have, and will have, a full and constant supply of reading matter. If it cannot be obtained in one form, it will be sought in some other; if the best qualities be inaccessible, an inferior kind will be taken; and in the absence of healthful nutriment, even poison will be received, and if its use be persisted in, it will soon come to be relished by the appetite it depraves. This explains why it is, that in a community so intelligent and moral as our own, the licentious and vulgar publications referred to by the Secretary of the Society, are, to any extent, patronized by our people. Who then can doubt, that the welfare of the nation is deeply interested in the present effort?

As to the legislative aid which is referred to in the resolution, Mr. BUTLER remarked, that it was not expected or desired, that the State Legislatures should prescribe, or even recommend, any particular collection of books, but only that they should make provisions, as had been done in his own State—New-York—for requiring the trustees or other superintendents of the Common Schools, to procure a library for the use of the pupils; and to assist, so far as their State finances might allow, in the accomplishment of the object. The officers and patrons of the schools should undoubtedly be left to make their own selections; but much assistance might be rendered by the State authorities, and he earnestly hoped, that in every quarter of the Union, they would direct their attention to the subject. From whatever source the funds may be obtained by the school officers, for the purchase of a library, it is obvious, that to make the best selections and with the least expense, they will require the aid of precisely such a Society as that now before us. The individuals who have formed it, have done so under the solemn conviction, that it is the duty of every lover of his country and of his kind, to do what he can to make the American Republic what it was designed to be by its founders, not merely a mighty, but an intelligent and virtuous nation—a light to other countries, and a blessing to mankind. If they shall be enabled by the co-operation of their fellow-citizens, and of the authorities entrusted with the care of public education, to contribute to the great object of placing a small but well selected library in each of our Common Schools, they will deserve the thanks of the present age and of posterity.

Mr. GEORGE COMBE, of Edinburgh. "I rejoice exceedingly in being present at this meeting for promoting the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. I have recently travelled over part of the Continent of Europe, and know something of the state of the public mind in Britain; and every where there is a call for education, loud and urgent, in proportion to the degree of liberty enjoyed by the people. The eyes of all the civilized world are bent on free America. If you proceed in the path of prosperity, morality, religion and reason, the cause of freedom is won in every clime. If you make shipwreck of social order, I despair of the destinies of mankind. But America will not fail in her duty to herself, and to the other nations of the earth. Every where, since I entered this country, I have heard the opinion of men of all sects, and all parties, warmly expressed in favor of Education, as the only basis of your future greatness and prosperity. We are just merging from the obscurities of the dark ages; we are in a state of transition: we have discovered the vast extent of popular ignorance, and only now, for the first time since the world began, has it been resolved to remove it.

This Society, in framing books for schools, will do well to ask themselves as each volume is presented, "what does this book teach the people to do." It is good to *know*; but it is better still to *do*. The history of the past is not a guide to the future, in the present state of civilized society. We are in a state of *transition*, and it is of greater importance to furnish sound, practical principles for the future, than to lead the memory with a minute knowledge of the past. The pages of histo

ry are used chiefly as charts, indicating the shoals on which human happiness has been shipwrecked. We must chalk out new and better lines for our future movements. It is extremely difficult to frame books embodying scientific principles, and applying them to practical purposes; but this object must be accomplished, before truly valuable school books shall be realized.

The plan of having a library in every school is admirable, and should not fall short of the full range of literature and science.

I conclude by adding one other practical remark. When I was in Berlin, in June, 1837, a member of the Council of the Minister of Public Instruction, for Prussia, told me that in one particular, the Prussian system of education appeared to him to be defective: in the lower schools, the girls and boys are educated alike; in the higher schools, those which are attended chiefly by the children of the middle classes, the boys are highly instructed in the elements of science, and the principles of the arts, but the girls are neglected. The consequence has been, that a generation of young men has grown up who do not find the females of their own rank possessed of intelligence sufficient to render them objects of permanent respect, and domestic felicity, has suffered, and is suffering a perceptible diminution from this cause. Whatever you do in education—preserve the women on a footing of equality with the men. The influence of the mother, on the young mind, is far greater than that even of the father. The father is engaged in arduous toils to provide for the subsistence of his family, and he may often have little leisure to communicate instruction. But the mother is the guardian, the constant companion, and the most efficient instructor of the young. But to enable her to answer the ceaseless inquiries of the child for information, you must provide her with knowledge herself. To be able to rear her offspring with success, she should be instructed in their physical and mental constitutions, and on the influence of external agencies upon them. America boasts of her chivalrous attentions to women. Let her not neglect their education.

The Hon. WILLIAM B. CALHOUN, Judge WAYNE, Mr. KEY, and other gentlemen, also addressed the meeting.

We are rejoiced that such meetings as this, and the Common School Union, have been held at the Capital of our country. Out of them will ultimately spring some plan for the diffusion of pure and wholesome knowledge, imbued with the soul and energy of all true virtue, through the whole length and breadth of our vast land.

#### "PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

We have received a letter from a friend of education, who has been "a common school teacher for the last thirty years," signed R. W. with the above motto, for which we have a very high respect:

For the suggestions which he makes, and the freedom with which he speaks, we feel obliged to him. We should expect so experienced and intelligent a man to feel sensible, as he says he does, that there is need of reformation in our schools; and to "watch, with intense anxiety, the late public movements in relation to this subject." We shall not notice his expressions of approbation of some of the plans proposed by us in previous numbers of this journal, but only reply in few words to a few of the objections we find urged in his letter to the classification of schools, and other points relating to the arrangement of the school house, &c. &c.

He thinks that there ought to be no division of schools, so as to separate children of different ages, because the older could not take care of the younger, on the way, and it is of great benefit to the younger to hear the recitations of their elders.

Now a mere division of a school need not prevent the older from accompanying their little brothers and sisters, except in cases where the schools were far separated. To many children the classification of schools could make no difference in any case: because many have no elder or younger brothers or sisters. Besides, if our friend R. W. has "proved all things," as he professes, and found that five or six years of age, is "old enough" for children to begin to attend school, who "have anybody to take proper care of them at home," and if his

advice is taken, the number requiring and likely to enjoy the superintendence of older brothers and sisters must be small indeed.

Our correspondent then inquires, how we would divide one hundred scholars into three schools: whether those who are learning their letters, and those beginning to read in easy lessons should go into one; those spelling and reading more difficult lessons, and learning a little geography, arithmetic and grammar, a second; and those adding to such branches, surveying, navigation, &c. a third. To this he replies emphatically "No," because, as he says, there would be a great want of "variety" in the exercises in all the three schools. We will quote his lively and just description of the scenes which such a plan suggests to his own imagination, with one remark, viz. that, in spite of all the "intense anxiety," with which he has watched the suggestions, made for the improvement of methods of instruction, he appears not to have apprehended anything of the nature of the course of teaching which we wish to see introduced into our schools.

"One scholar," says R. W. "recites, 'twice two is four,' twice three is six, sixty seconds make a minute, sixty minutes an hour; another defines bays, gulfs, sounds and the like; another speaks of degrees, angles and triangles. These, together with the accompanying illustrations of the teacher, form a pleasing variety. Often have I seen, with indescribable pleasure, the little children, seated on their low benches, with ears open and eyes glistening, evidently comprehending some of the instruction designed for others. Now is not this better than to place them separately, where A stammers his monosyllable as well as B; B as well as C; and where, in order to relieve them from the tedium of their dull, monotonous course, we are obliged to give them slates, set them to making pictures, playing on Jewsharps, or singing ditties?"

Now from these and some of the subsequent remarks, it is evident to us, that our correspondent is not thoroughly acquainted with the methods of instruction, or the class of schools which are recommended for the younger children. We would have subjects and methods chosen, for each school, best adapted to children of the age to be placed in it; and then, if he would enter the younger school, we can assure him he would find the bright-eyed little ones, beaming more than in a school in which they are only suffered to sit by, and listen to instruction designed for others. Nothing is plainer, than that in such a school as he proposes, the teacher must be distracted by the attempt to teach many of different ages, simultaneously, *viva voce* in the same branches, or totally neglect some, while devoting himself exclusively to others. This we know full well, and had in view, when we first began to write on the difficulties attending most of our common schools. To avoid them in some degree, we have proposed slates and other expedients; which we have seen successfully employed, to keep the young usefully engaged, and the school undisturbed by them. But R. W. disapproves of slates, and ridicules the practice of vocal music in school. Very well, if the public come to that conclusion after giving as much reflection, making as many observations, enquiries and experiments as we have done in past years—they must judge for themselves. We believe, however, that our correspondent is here writing against what he has little acquaintance with. We will show him more variety in each class of schools than he ever saw in one, and a better kind of variety too.

He thinks it effeminacy to recommend a covered way for children going out in school hours, and the use of a thermometer to regulate the temperature within. He thinks the proper way to make children healthy, is to encourage them to run unnecessarily in the snow and rain, to favor their getting their feet wet, and to leave the teacher to make himself comfortable in his place, without regard to the feelings of his pupils. He thinks this was the way in which an honored grandmother of his once seasoned herself into a heroine, so that on being one day earnestly solicited by a wild Indian for a mug of cider, and having the respectful request backed with an uplifted tomahawk, she drove him off with a fire shovel. It appears to us, however, that if exposure to the elements, and utter contempt of the rules of health, as taught by experience, could give any pre-eminence, the Indian ought to have been bolder and more athletic than the grandmother of Mr. R. W. and the hero of the scene.

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## A COMMON EXCUSE.

When I have asked individuals to make some personal effort for the improvement of common schools, it has not unfrequently been said:

"Why do you take up this subject? Have we not a large school fund, and an excellent school system? This business belongs to the government, not to individuals."

By such remarks, they have always reminded me of the boy, who was indentured in the old fashioned way, to work nine months in the year, and receive an education the remaining three months. But the boy could never be induced to attend the school, and the neighbors said to him, "why do you not go to school as other boys do?" To which the boy observed, "My master has agreed in the denture, to give me an education, and he is bound to do it, and I am not going to the school house arter it."

Now, some of us seem to think that the school fund and the school law "are bound to give us an education," and we are not to make an effort ourselves for it.

But a school law is not education—a school fund is not education. *Individual sacrifice and effort* is the price of knowledge; and, relying upon any thing else, prevents the school law and the school fund from aiding us.—*Common School Almanac.*

## PREMIUM OFFERED.

The Directors of the American Institute of Instruction, hereby offer a premium of

## FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS

for the best Essay that may be furnished, on "A System of Education best adapted to the Common Schools of our country," to embrace the formation of school districts, the construction of school houses, and the entire course of school education, from the most elementary department to the highest embraced in our public schools; it being understood that the premium will not be awarded if no Essay be presented, which, in the opinion of the Directors of the Institute, shall be worthy of it.

Candidates for the premium will please send their Essays, *post paid*—each accompanied by the author's name, and a private mark, sealed up, corresponding to the one borne on the title page of the essay, to either of the Committee, on or before the last Wednesday in May, 1839. The award to be made at the annual meeting of the Institute in August, 1839.

G. F. THAYER, Boston.

HORACE MANN, "

JAMES G. CARTER, Lancaster. }

Committee.

## THE RIGHT MEANING OF EDUCATION.

Some think going to school is getting an education; others, attending college; others, studying one of the learned professions after passing one; others, that a year spent in travelling, is alone necessary to complete a college education. There are too many who imagine they have given their daughters an education, when they have sent them to the best school or academy in their town, county or state; others, when they have hired for them, the most celebrated teachers, particularly of music, drawing, dancing, &c. What a pity it is, that more parents do not realize, that what they might do for their children, by proper examples, physical treatment, moral training and intellectual instruction, is generally of vastly greater importance, than can be by others. Parents who labor early and late to lay up money, or to pay instructors, might often lead much easier lives, and accomplish their object much better, by learning their duties, as the natural instructors of their children, and then performing them.

**ARISTOTLES' CRITERION OF AN HONEST AND INTELLIGENT GOVERNMENT.**—A government ruling for the benefit of all is, of its very nature, anxious for the education of all, not only because intelligence is in itself a good, and the condition of good, but in order that its subject may be able to appreciate the benefits of which it is itself the source; whereas a government ruling for the profit of its administration is naturally willing to debase the mind and character of the governed, to the end that they may be disqualified to understand, to care for, and to assert their rights.

## AN OPINION OF PESTALOZZI.

"The first hour of instruction is the hour of birth; the first tutor is nature; and her tuition begins, from the moment when the child's senses are open to the impressions of the surrounding world."

Man cannot propose a higher and holier object of deliberation than Education itself, and all that appertains to it.

Plato.

It was a remark of Dr. Dwight, that in the Connecticut Common Schools generally, more time was spent in learning a few things poorly, than need be spent in learning many well.

## COLEBROOK.

An association was formed in this town, early in the fall which is doing much good. As the town refused to pay its school visitors, the association appropriates a certain sum to one of the visitors to visit all the schools in town who must submit a written report of the condition of each to the association, and we believe to the school society. The association also purchased a supply of the best school books, which they furnish to scholars, who can afford to pay, at cost, and to them who cannot, gratis. This is highly commendable. How different is the case in many districts which we could name, where the teachers are obliged to furnish the poor children with books out of their own inadequate wages. We know of one instance where this was done by a female teacher, when her own wages amounted to but one dollar and fifty cents a week. Ought such things so to be?

## MAINE.

The Family and School Visitor, a weekly paper, has been commenced at Portland and Bangor, (being published in both places,) edited by Mr. CYRIL PEARL. It mentions, that about 190,000 children and youth, in that state, came within the provisions of the Common School law, of whom about seven tenths usually attend school, according to the returns recently published by the Secretary of State, 3,446 districts are spoken of by that officer, but probably there are more; and it is conjectured that 3,500 teachers are employed in summer, and nearly as many more in winter. More than \$221,000 are expended annually for the support of teachers. This money is raised chiefly by taxes on polls and estates, with a small sum from a bank tax or fund.

The average time which the schools are kept, is stated at about seven weeks by male teachers, and between nine and ten weeks by females. The editor speaks favorably, and indeed highly of the best schools; but remarks that such are few and scattered.

The friends of education in Maine, ask for the appointment of a Board of Education, after the example of several other states. A bill for that object was before the legislature last season, and laid over for this season. "We have conversed extensively," said the Visitor, "with School Committees, Editors and men of influence, in various callings and professions, and nearly all agree that such a measure is desirable."

"There is no other safe foundation for our civil, literary or educational institutions, than that laid in the essential elements of Christianity. To think of educating the human mind in its highest perfection, without recognizing this truth, is to attempt the highest earthly experiments, without the appropriate means. Still it is not necessary to dispute about denominational peculiarities in an effort of this kind.

It will be seen by the following extract that Gov. Fairfield entertains the same views of school improvement which we have advocated.

"It must be a source of sincere gratification to every one feeling an interest in the cause of human improvement, as well as to every well wisher of his country and its institutions, that the subject of Education, especially in connection with our primary schools, is beginning to receive the attention it so richly deserves. Based, as our free institutions are, upon the virtue and intelligence of the people, the cause of Common Schools, I trust, will ever command the fostering care of the Legislature. And every friend of religion and of morals—every one desirous of witnessing a ready obedience to the laws, the prevalence of temperance, virtue and good order in the community, may here find an ample field for his most strenuous and untiring efforts. Upon this subject, you, as legislators, can hardly do too much. The most anxious solicitude—the most unwearied exertions—the amplest expenditure, will scarcely fail to secure a rich and enduring recompense.

"While it is admitted that our system, or that prevailing in New England, combines advantages surpassed, perhaps, by few others, if any, in the world, still, that there is much, very much room for improvement, no one can doubt who has turned his attention at all to the subject. The best mode however, of affecting this, is left for your united wisdom and experience to devise.

"Without pretending to any superior knowledge in regard to this matter—and being much more willing to follow a well chosen track, than ambitious to originate new ones, I would suggest for your consideration, whether the establishment of a Board of Education, with an active, zealous and efficient Secretary, to collect information touching the existing state of our schools—present modes of instruction—qualifications of teachers—construction of school houses, &c. and to disseminate information upon these and kindred subjects, by lectures and otherwise, similar to the course adopted in Massachusetts, might not be found to be the most judicious mode of beginning the great work of reform and improvement.

"And whether a Seminary might not be endowed, or a department in some existing institution exclusively devoted to the education of teachers for Common Schools, is well worthy of consideration. Our ideas however, must necessarily be somewhat indefinite, as to the precise means of improvement, until the statistics upon this subject have been faithfully collected."

Amid the noise and bustle of the "border troubles," Gov. Fairfield's recommendations were lost sight of.

### CONNECTICUT STATE LYCEUM.

The annual meeting of the Connecticut State Lyceum, will be holden at Hartford, on Tuesday, the 7th of May. It is requested that all County and Town Lyceums, and all Associations of Teachers, or other bodies for the improvement of schools will send delegates.

Besides the general progress of education in the State, it is expected that subjects of discussion respecting the improvement of school houses, and the establishment of Teachers' Seminaries, will be presented to the Lyceum.

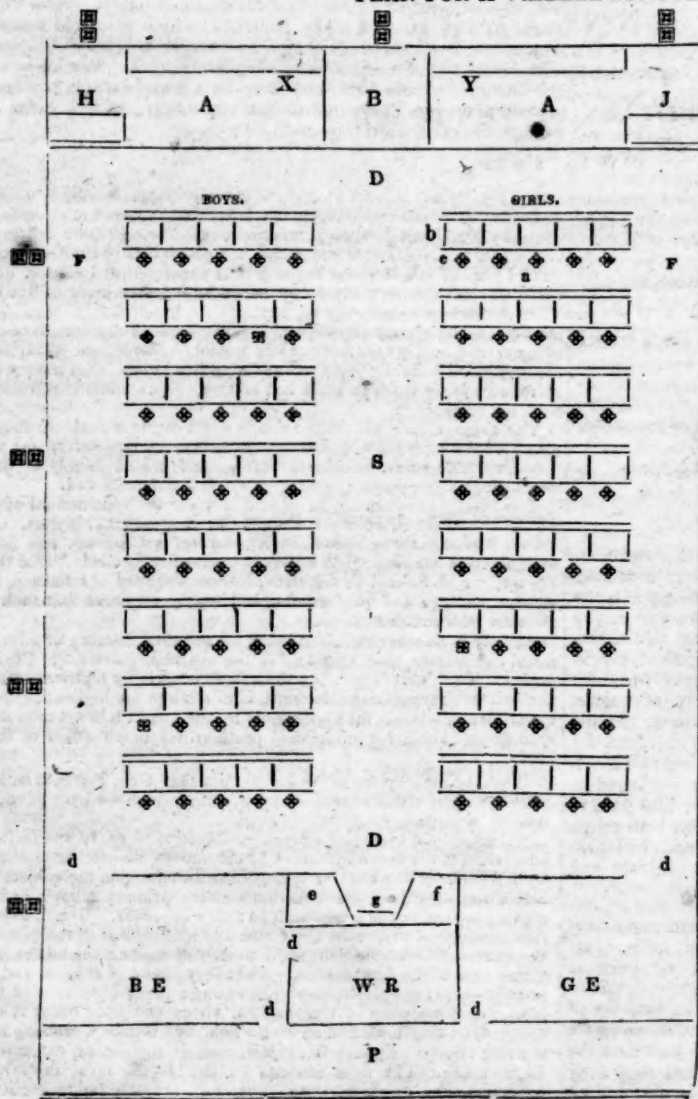
By order of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

We gladly give another insertion to the above notice.

No place or hour for meeting is specified in the notice of the Executive Committee. 10 o'clock, A. M. will probably be as convenient a time for organization as could be named. And we understand that the Executive Committee of the Hartford Young Men's Institute, have engaged and tendered to the Committee of the State Lyceum, the use of Gilman's Hall for the occasion.

There are about 30 towns from which we have received no returns. We would request the Representatives to bring along with them all returns and reports which may be in the hands of school visitors, clerks and friends of common schools.

### PLAN FOR A VILLAGE SCHOOL HOUSE.



As we have received several applications for Dr. Alcott's "plan for a village school house," we republish from No. 6, the plan submitted by the superintendent of common schools of Michigan, to the Legislature of that State. It is Dr. Alcott's with one or two immaterial alterations. We subjoin the remarks of the superintendent.

"In the construction of a school house, the windows should be high, so as to prevent out door occurrences from attracting attention, also for the purpose of ventilating the room without throwing a current of air upon the head and neck of the pupils. A school room should be equally warmed throughout every part of it.

The school room should be so large as to contain a sufficient quantity of fresh and pure air. For the want of space to contain enough of this vital element, many a child has been sacrificed. The want of space and air is a waste of health and life.

The dimensions of the building should be such as to allow 31 feet to each scholar, including the platform of the teacher and passages.

The floor of the school room should be level, and not on an inclined plane. Much is lost in symmetry, convenience and comfort by inclined floors, without any thing gained to compensate the loss.

The desks for scholars should be level; (Dr. Alcott thinks that they should slope one inch to the foot,) and the seat for each scholar separate, and confined to the floor. Those in front should be lower for smaller children than the rows in the rear.

The backs to the seats should be so constructed as to conform to the natural curve of the back of the child. If so made, when he leans back for rest the whole frame will be equally supported. This, on examination, will be found to be an important principle.

The following ground plan of a school house contains 8 separate seats and desks. The whole edifice, without the portico, is 33 feet long, and 33 feet wide. The plan may be enlarged or diminished according to this rule. For ten scholars add four feet to the length; for 25 scholars, add 4 feet to both length and width. For a less number of scholars, the length or breadth or both, may be diminished at the same rate. The school room here presented is 47 feet by 35 feet within the walls."

### EXPLANATIONS.

- Windows.
- X. Cabinet for apparatus and specimens.
- Y. Book-case.
- A.B.A. Platform for the teacher, 6 feet wide and 9 inches high.
- B. To be removed for stove in winter.
- D.D. Passages 6 feet wide.
- H. J. Teacher's and Assistant's desks.
- F.F. Passages 3 feet wide.
- S. Floor, 9 feet wide.
- b. Desks for scholars, 18 inches wide and 2 feet long.
- c. Seats for scholars.
- a. Passages between the seats and next row of desks, 15 inches wide: a desk, seat and passage occupy 4 ft.; desk 18 in., passage between it and seat 2 in.; seat 13 in.; and passage 15 in.
- d, d., &c. Doors.
- e. Closet.
- f. Sink to be concealed by a falling lid.
- g. Fire place.
- B. E. Boys entry, 10 by 12 ft.
- G. E. Girls entry, 12 by 10 ft.
- W. R. Wood room.
- P. Doric Portico in front.